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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the history of junior colleges in the United States. Each of its five chapters examines an aspect of these colleges, such as community interests and state legislation. Chapter 1 discusses junior college historiography, testing the conventional explanation of the junior college's origins and early development against the historical record. This chapter also argues that junior college historiography has been captive to the idealist fallacy, evidenced by the literature's disregard for the unique experiences of individual junior colleges. In this chapter, the author questions the prominent role the literature has assigned to university leaders in creating a public awareness of and support for the junior college. Chapter 2 attempts to lay a foundation for a new explanation of the junior college and its origins in the form of a comprehensive inventory of these two-year institutions and their sponsoring communities. Chapter 3 advances the explanation of the municipal junior college's origins that centers on the pivotal role of community interests and local conditions in giving life and direction to this institution. Chapter 4 argues that the explanation of the municipal junior college's origins cannot be extended to include either its small town or its great city counterparts. Finally, Chapter 5 provides evidence that school historians have consistently understated the extent, intensity, and effectiveness of the resistance with which the early junior college was met. (Contains 259 references.) (EMH)

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The Origins and Development of the Early Public Junior College: 1900 - 1940

Robert Patrick Pedersen

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
under the Executive Committee of The Graduate
School of Arts and Sciences

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

2000

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Robert Pederson

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My debt to Professor Sloan is incalculable. He guided, but never compelled. He counseled, without chiding. He was patient, when others would have lost all faith. And he is proof that we are all inspired best by example.

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Last, I do not want to forget those who are sadly no longer with us. It was a gift from Professor Sindlinger, more than two decades ago, that set me on this journey. And neither do I want to forget Professor Brick, whom I never had the opportunity to meet, but whose dissertation was an inspiration and reminder of what could be accomplished when there is the will. To his wife, who gladly is still among us, I am indebted for giving me a deeper understanding and appreciation of Professor Brick's vision of the early junior college which, hopefully, I have carried forward.

Chapter I

Junior College Historiography

> *It is good to have knowledge of the history of the community college, but it is more important to know about the philosophy and objectives of the community college.*
>
> Charles Monroe[1]

Introduction

As conventionally portrayed, the genesis of the early public junior college is a simple and inspiring story. Although the exact date is still a matter of some debate, there is general agreement that Illinois's Joliet

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[1] Charles R. Monroe, Profile of the Community College (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972), 21.

Readers unfamiliar with the conventions surrounding the terminology of America's two-year colleges can be easily confused by the seemingly arbitrary use of the adjectives -- "junior" and "community" -- in describing these institutions. As a general but imprecise rule, when discussing either public or private two-year colleges operating before 1960, the phrase "junior college" is applied uniformly. Since 1960, however, public two-year colleges have come to style themselves as community colleges, while their private counterparts have retained the traditional phrasing. Of course, some public two-year colleges (e.g., Illinois' Joliet Junior College and Maryland's Hagerstown Junior College) have chosen not to change, while a number of private two-year colleges have dropped the "junior" from their names altogether.

Township school board organized the nation's first junior college sometime between 1901 and 1902.[1] Other progressive communities, the story continues, quickly followed Joliet's lead. These communities, encouraged by prominent university men and inspired by powerful, democratic forces within the American culture, embraced the public junior college with the intent of bringing higher education within the reach of those Americans long barred from university attendance by distance, schooling deficiencies, and poverty. Within just 40 years, the story typically

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[1] For a spirited defense of 1902 as the founding date for Joliet Junior College, see Robert Smolich, "An Analysis of Influences Affecting the Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," (Ed.D. diss., University of Texas, 1964), 60-61. Vaughan, as well as Boggs and Cater, however, have sided with 1901. See George Vaughan, The Community College Story (Washington, DC: American Association of Community Colleges, 1994), 28, and George R. Boggs and Judy L. Carter, "The Historical Development of Academic Programs in Community Colleges," in A Handbook on the Community College in America (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1994), 219. To add further confusion to the matter, also in 1994 Witt et al. rejected both these dates, seeming to favor 1913 based on the claim that the junior college occupied separate facilities that year. Unfortunately for this view, and as Smolich fully documents, 1913 only saw the passage of a bond issue to expand Central High, not the construction of a separate junior college wing or building. It was not until 1915 that these voter-approved bonds were even sold, and construction of what came to be known as the "Junior College Wing" was not completed until 1916, with junior college classes being first offered in the new facilities in 1917. See Allen Witt, et. al., America's Community Colleges (Washington, DC: The American Association of Community Colleges, 1994), 22.

concludes, the public junior college transformed American higher education into an accessible, national system of institutions fully capable of meeting the need of a modern, industrial society for a well-schooled, properly acculturated workforce.

Two closely-related themes underpin the frequent re-tellings of this basic story. The first is the theme of grandiosity. In these histories, the junior college is cast as a transformational institution. Despite the fact that the great majority of early junior colleges were small, typically enrolling fewer than 75 students, borrowed a faculty of two or three and some classroom space from their sponsoring high school, and took their curriculum whole cloth from the nearest state university, these histories would yet have us see the junior college as a dynamic and significant force within American education. One finds just this inflated sense of the early junior college's significance in Brint and Karabel's assertion that "of all the changes in American education in the twentieth century, none has had a greater impact than the rise of the two-year, junior college."[1]

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[1] Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, The Diverted Dream (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 6.

The second theme common to this literature is the positivist notion that the triumph of the junior college, while achieved through conflict, was nonetheless *inevitable*. Casting the junior college as David to the university Goliath, historians have credited this upstart institution with supplanting the study of Latin, rhetoric, and logic with a practical, vocationally-oriented curriculum better suited to the requirements of a dynamic industrial democracy. Overcoming elite interests and ancient prejudices, this theme continues, the junior college opened the door of higher education to the nation's aspiring and worthy poor, forever ending the hold of the nation's social and economic elite upon the academy. We are never to doubt that the emergence of the public junior college -- embodying as it did a "uniquely American" ideology at once egalitarian and pragmatic -- was ever at risk of being thwarted by the entrenched forces of inherited privilege.

For Gundar Myron,

> The basic conceptions of the community college represent the antithesis of educational elitism often associated with higher education in America. The very core of the community college philosophy is a commitment to every citizen -- to expand post-high school educational opportunities to persons at all socio-economic levels and to all segments of the population.

As Carl Hempel has observed, idealist histories of this sort possess a powerful and persuasive "emotive appeal" that "evoke vivid pictorial associations." Through their use of images of growth and accretion, such histories can infuse even the most mundane events with a transcendent significance.[1] It is just this spirit that has led George Vaughan and others to represent America's early junior colleges -- some 285 small, widely scattered, and only loosely affiliated institutions -- as a movement, the ultimate expression of American educational virtue and progressive ideals -- the "people's college."

Within the junior college literature, similar expressions are legion. One notes, for example, Charles Monroe's observation that the junior college provided American communities with the means

> to create opportunity for citizens of all varieties of high ability, of all social and economic classes, to develop their talents for the service of society and for their own self-interest.

See Gunder A. Myran, Community Services in the Community Colleges (Washington, DC: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1969), 50, and Romesary Gillett-Karam, Suanne D. Roueche, and John E. Roueche, Underrepresentation and the Question of Diversity: Women and Minorities in the Community College (Washington, DC: The Community College Press, 1991), 6.

[1] Carl Hempel, "Functions of General Laws in History," Journal of Philosophy 39 (1942): 45.

Vaughan, The Community College Story, 28.

The Conventional Explanation

As its initial step in a reappraisal of junior college history, this chapter will test the conventional explanation of the junior college's origins and early development against the historical record. Through this test, we intend to show that this explanation is flawed on at least three counts. First, its representation of the junior college as a democratic institution is without basis. To contend that early junior colleges were egalitarian in their policies and practices is, most obviously, to ignore the many early public junior colleges that willingly accommodated themselves to de jure segregation.* As we will more fully detail in this chapter, this view also requires one to ignore that

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* A number of modern community colleges can trace their origins to segregated junior colleges. Montgomery College, sponsored by Montgomery County, Maryland, is the outgrowth of the merger of the all-white Montgomery Junior College and the African-American Lincoln Junior College. Both were organized in 1946, on a "separate-but-equal" basis and were merged following the Brown decision. Generally, very little is known about the public African American junior colleges. Edward Brice, "A Study of the Status of Junior Colleges for Negroes in the United States," (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1949) has only recently been augmented by Walter I. Smith, The Magnificent Twelve: Florida's Black Junior Colleges, (Winter Park, FL: FOUR-G Publishers, 1994). The complicity of the junior college's national spokesmen in the preservation of de jure segregation can be seen in Leonard Koos, "A Junior College Plan for Maryland," School Review 55, no. 6 (June, 1947): 333-334.

virtually every junior college imposed stringent admissions standards upon its students, that many levied substantial -- even onerous -- tuition charges without regard for a student's ability to pay, and that many fostered a student extra-curriculum distinguished by its social exclusivity.

Second, this chapter will argue that junior college historiography has been captive to the idealist fallacy, evidenced by this literature's almost total disregard for the unique experiences of individual junior colleges.[7] With rare exception, junior college historians have written exclusively of the evolution of a distinctive junior college ideology as articulated by such nationally-prominent schoolmen as Leonard Koos and Walter Crosby Eells without examining whether this ideology was shared by those parochial figures – civic leaders, schoolmen, parents, and students – directly responsible for the organization, governance, and support of these institutions. For these scholars, the junior college was an idea, to which individual institutions merely

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[7] To quote Frye: "National writers on the junior college also showed little interest in the history or goals of individual colleges." See, John H. Frye, The Vision of the Public Junior College, 1900-1940 (New York: Greenwood Press, 1992), 74.

conformed.[10] In these histories, all junior colleges -- whether established in rural Mississippi, the farmlands of Iowa, or the city of Chicago -- sprang from a common source, served similar purposes, and evolved collectively in lock step through a fixed sequence of stages, phases, or periods.[11]

Third and finally, this chapter will question the prominent role this literature has assigned to such university leaders as William Rainey Harper and David Starr Jordan in creating a public awareness of, and support for the junior college. It was these university presidents, Ralph Fields and others have argued, who defined the junior college's purposes and determined its practices in the public mind. And even more importantly,

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[10] James W. Thorton expressed this view in almost Biblical terms: "First, of course, there was the idea." See, James W. Thornton, The Community Junior College, 3rd ed. (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1972), 46.

[11] Four and five are most often given as the number of these stages or phases. Thornton breaks his history into four "main stages," unfolding between 1850 and 1965. Proctor divides the development of California's junior colleges into four stages. For Deegan and Tillery, there are five "generations," while Dougherty divides the development of Illinois's junior colleges into four stages. See Thornton, The Community Junior College, 47; William Deegan, Dale Tillery, and Associates, Renewing the American Community College (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1985), 4; and Kevin Dougherty, "The Politics of Community College Expansion: The Cases of Illinois and Washington State" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1983), 63.

it was these men, we are to believe, who somehow succeeded in inspiring communities as widely scattered as Fort Scott, Kansas, and Everett, Washington, to invest the substantial time, energy, and funds required to open and maintain a public junior college.

Over the last two decades, a few scholars have grown increasingly critical of the method and content of junior college historiography. Some have questioned the reasonableness of this literature's assumptions, the accuracy of its sources, and the appropriateness of its methods. Others have criticized the role this literature has assigned to Chicago's William Rainey Harper as Zeus to the junior college Athene.[12] Still others have faulted its overall balance, contending that the histories of William Deegan, Dale Tillery, and others have assigned undue importance to the words and actions of a few "great men" while ignoring parochial interests and influences.[13]

Such questioning of a well-established historiography is to be expected. New evidence inevitably

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[12] James Ratcliff, "Shall We Forget William Rainey Harper?" Community College Review 13, no. 4 (1986): 12-19.

[13] See Dougherty, "The Politics of Community College Expansion," 25-28 and Robert P. Pedersen, "State Government and the Junior College, 1901-1946," Community College Review 14, no. 4 (1987): 49-52

challenges old assumptions, just as a changing cultural context prompts new questions of the past.[14] But as Michael Stanford observes, reflecting on Butterfield, any rejection of an established historiography should not be capricious, in that it is not at all certain, given the influence of "posterity, Zeitgeist and propinquity" upon the historian's work, that current generalizations about the past are _a priori_ more reliable than earlier generalizations.[15] If an established historiography is to be set aside, such an action should only follow a thorough and systematic examination of that historiography's assumptions, its treatment of the historical record, and the reasonableness of its generalizations. Yet, as even the most ardent detractors of the current junior college historiography must acknowledge, their criticism has failed to meet this standard. Frye and others have flatly rejected any need to first weigh this literature against Stanford's sensible criteria, contending that any such

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[14] R. G. Collingwood, _The Idea of History_ (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), 248.

[15] Michael Stanford, _The Nature of Historical Knowledge_ (Oxford: Blackwell, 1986), 89-90.

analysis would be futile. It is a literature, they claim, too "thin" and "insubstantial" to justify the effort.[9]

Whatever concerns we might have with the content and method of the prevailing junior college historiography -- and, as we will show, there is much to be concerned about -- it should not be summarily dismissed. Having developed over nearly eighty years, this literature constitutes a substantial body of scholarship, at once shaping and mirroring our understanding of the American two-year college. Despite its periodic controversies, this literature is also characterized by an unusual degree of consensus on basic questions of chronology, on its association of the junior college with higher -- rather than secondary -- education, and on the broad social and cultural conditions most responsible for shaping the junior college's form and purposes.

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[9] Frye, The Vision of the Public Junior College, 5. Note also the characterization of the two-year college as a "movement lacking in written history" in Witt, American's Community College's, xviii.

[10] In recent years, junior college history has gained a degree of notoriety as a literature divided into two, fundamentally opposed camps. Yet the scholarship of L. Steven Zwerling and his successors -- notably Levine and Karabel -- has a surprisingly great deal in common with the literature it claims to refute. L. Steven Zwerling, for example, relies upon essentially the same chronology that had underpinned the works of Gray, McDowell, and Proctor earlier in this century. Similarly, Levine and

Rather than dismissing the prevailing junior college historiography, this chapter will undertake a close reading of this literature, guided by two general questions. First, it will ask whether the various monographs, dissertations, and book chapters that purport to describe the junior college's origins and early development meet the standards of the historian's craft. Do these works draw their inferences from a sound, balanced, and representative body of evidence? Is their analysis free of ambiguity, anachronistic thinking, and the more common logical fallacies? Second, and in keeping with Collingwood, it will ask whether this literature has not only enlarged our knowledge of the early public junior college itself but has deepened our understanding of the era in which it developed.[18] In short, is all that has passed for junior college history, history at all?

Dougherty make use of the same secondary sources -- notably the writings of Harper, Lange, and Gray -- favored by Fields and Thornton in the 1960s. Histories from both camps represent university presidents as playing a decisive role in shaping the structure and purposes of the junior college, closely identify the junior college with an egalitarian rhetoric (if not, necessarily, egalitarian practices), and discount the involvement of sponsoring communities.

[18] Collingwood, The Idea of History, 269-70.

Examining Method, Sources, and Argument

Guiding our reading of the prevailing junior college literature will be three criteria of competent history: an accurate chronology, the use of evidence drawn from appropriate and verifiable sources, and an underlying logical structure whose assumptions not only avoid the more obvious logical fallacies, but whose first and necessary causes are sufficient to explain the observed effects.[1]

1. Evaluating the Chronology

Although historians of the junior college may have grown increasingly divided over the institution's "true" social purposes, they are of one mind on the general outline of its chronology. This outline is nowhere more clearly set forth than in Franklin Parker and Anne

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[1] With respect to the first and second criteria, as Stanford observes, "we first must get our facts right." This not only entails the weighing of evidence for accuracy, relevance, and the influence of the process of time upon the evidence itself, but then the placement of the evidence in its proper temporal order – an extremely difficult set of tasks. The third criterion reflects David Hackett Fischer's view that history should, and can be "a structured, ordered, controlled, empirical, rational discipline of thought." See Stanford, The Nature of Historical Knowledge, 61-62, and David Hackett Fisher, Historians' Fallacies (New York: Harper & Row, 1970), xxi.

Bailey's simple and straight-forward chronology.[20] The Parker-Bailey chronology, published in 1965, begins by highlighting two events which, at the time, held only local significance: Joliet Junior College's "establishment" in 1901, followed in 1910 by the "founding" of central California's Fresno Junior College. Yet, while several hundred junior colleges would be organized over the next six decades and several of these would even form the nucleus of prominent universities, not one would figure among Parker and Bailey's subsequent milestones. From 1910 onward, their chronology focuses exclusively on the development of the junior college's principal advocacy organization, the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC), and the contributions of certain prominent educators to this organization's development. The authors include, among their subsequent

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[20] Franklin Parker and Anne Bailey, The Junior and Community College: A Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertations, 1918 - 1963 (Washington, DC: American Association of Junior Colleges, 1965), 6. An earlier chronology can be found in Henry W. Littlefield, "Factors Influencing the Growth of the Junior College" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1940). While somewhat more detailed than Parker and Bailey's, the Littlefield chronology is equally preoccupied with organizations and individuals of national prominence. Except for a single reference to events at Joliet, Littlefield highlights the actions of various university leaders and the AAJC in advancing the interests of the junior college as a national movement.

milestones, the AAJC's incorporation in 1921, the inaugural issue of the AAJC's Junior College Journal in 1930, and, in 1960, the Kellogg Foundation's creation of the Junior College Leadership Program through the efforts of AAJC president, Edmund Gleazer. The message of Parker and Bailey's chronology is clear: individual junior colleges are insignificant players in the history of what is best understood as a national movement.

Whatever one might think of the cosmopolitan bias evident in Parker and Bailey's choice of milestones, the question at hand is whether, simply put, the events and dates they cite can be squared against the historical record. In some instances, particularly with regard to their later milestones, the record corroborates the Parker-Bailey chronology. Reliable sources, for example, confirm that the American Association of Junior Colleges was organized in St. Louis in August, 1921, and that the first issue of the association's Junior College Journal was published in 1930 under the editorship of Vanderbilt's Doak Campbell.

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[4] In 1960 the W. K. Kellogg Foundation made substantial grants to Teachers College, the University of California at Los Angeles, and several other prominent universities to establish and support doctoral programs that would prepare administrators for the then rapidly increasing number of junior colleges.

However, the record fails to corroborate Parker and Bailey's earliest milestones. No documentary evidence supports the assertion that a public junior college was established at Joliet in 1901 or at Fresno in 1910. One looks in vain through school board minutes, newspapers, and other local sources for some evidence of either action. Neither does one find any indication of the influence of William Rainey Harper upon the purported events.[*] What the historical record does reveal is that neither junior college arose de novo, spontaneously emerging from the fertile imagination of Harper, Jordan, or Berkeley's Alexis Lange. Rather, these schools are best understood as two examples (and not especially notable examples, at that) of the fairly widespread curricular experimentation being undertaken by many larger public

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[*] One can only speculate as to why, in the absence of corroborating evidence, the notion that junior colleges were established at Joliet and Fresno between 1900 and 1910 has come to enjoy such wide and unquestioned acceptance. One possible explanation is that junior college historians have felt some need to place the origins of the junior college in this century's first decade in order to justify the leading role they have assigned to William Rainey Harper in the junior college's development. This, from their perspective, is a vital connection, for it not only associates the junior college with a prominent cosmopolitan educator, but emphasizes its ties to higher – rather than secondary – education. To place the beginnings of the public junior college much after 1900 would, of course, complicate this connection, given Harper's untimely death in 1906.

high schools in the decades around 1900. Beginning as early as the 1870s, American high schools -- themselves relative newcomers to the educational landscape -- proved eager to test their limits. Some added college-level courses, while others appended commerical schools or vocational institutes to the narrow, college-preparatory curriculum that enrolled the vast majority of their students. One especially adventuresome school district -- Detroit's -- went so far as to acquire a troubled medical college in 1917 while many, including Joliet, operated normal schools.

Even the most cursory review of the sources reveals the remarkable breadth and extent of this experimentation. From Ralph Rodney Fields's research, we know that the curriculum of Baltimore's leading academic high school included collegiate-grade courses as early as 1870, while Tyrus Hillway found that Greeley, Colorado's high school had introduced a fifth year of academic work -- academically comparable to the course of studies being followed by freshmen at the University of Colorado -- by the 1880s.[1] Eells reported, and Arthur Andrews later

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[1] For a discussion of Baltimore's experiment with collegiate-grade instruction, see Ralph Rodney Fields, "A Case Study of Major Educational Changes in a Two-Year College: The Democratization of Baltimore Junior College,

confirmed from reliable sources, that by 1885 the East Side High School of Saginaw, Michigan, was offering college work in Latin, trigonometry, English, and history, while Elizabeth Brooks found evidence of a well-enrolled program of college-level courses at Indiana's East Chicago High School in approximately the same year.[24]

Beyond demonstrating its extent, local records also suggest that much of this experimentation with the upward expansion of the public high school's curriculum was the outgrowth of entirely local initiative. That these initiatives arose concurrently, yet independently, is suggested by the striking variance in the terminology with which they are described in local records. What Joliet's J. Stanley Brown referred to as his "postgraduate" program, Goshen's Victor Hedgepeth characterized as a

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1947-1970" (Ed.D. diss., Teachers College, 1971), 78. For a discussion of similar experiments in Colorado, see Tyrus Hillway, The American Two-Year College (New York: Harper & Bros., 1958).

[24] Walter Crosby Eells, The Junior College (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1931), 53. Andrews was president of Grand Rapids Junior College in 1939 when he outlined the early history of the junior college in Michigan. According to Andrews, in 1901 A.B. Whitney (who later became the dean of the University of Michigan's School of Education) introduced postgraduate work at Saginaw during his tenure as Saginaw's superintendent. See Arthur Andrews, "Welcome to Grand Rapids," Junior College Journal 9 no. 8 (1939): 420. Elizabeth Brooks, "The Junior College" (master's thesis, Clark University, 1917), 50.

"six-year high school." Fresno operated a "collegiate division" while several Kansas high schools appended an "upward extension program" to the standard high school curriculum.[11] Not until 1910, in fact, do we find anything approaching consensus on the phrase "junior college" as the most appropriate term for a high school-based program of college courses. In the 1912 edition of Paul Monroe's Cyclopedia of Education, Ellwood Cubberley asserted that the phrase "junior college" only properly described the lower divisions of the Universities of Chicago and California. It was Only "by transfer," he went on, that this phrase had been more broadly applied to the postgraduate programs recently found in some public high schools.[12] Even Lange, frequently credited with being one

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[11] In Everett, Washington, the school board introduced what it termed a "college year" program in 1910. At its opening, the program enrolled 42 students, but only 19 completed the year's course. By 1915, this experiment developed into Everett Junior College. Alan Price Crawfurd, "The Junior College Movement in Washington State from 1915 to 1955" (Ed.D. diss., University of Denver, 1959), 57.

[12] Paul Monroe, An Cyclopedia of Education (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1912), 573. Spindt's research tends to bear out Cubberley's etymology. As Spindt found, as late as 1913 Fresno's school superintendent McLane still used quotation marks to set off the phrase "junior college" in a School Review article, while Will C. Wood, California's Commissioner of Secondary Education, noted in his 1914 report to the state legislature that he only referred to the state's many postgraduate programs as junior colleges

"for convenience." Not until 1915 did the phrase appear free of quotation marks in California's state reports and education journals. See H.A. Spindt, "Beginnings of the Junior College in California, 1907-1921," College and University 33, no. 1 (Fall 1957): 27.

State governments were especially slow in adopting the phrase "junior college" to designate high school-based college programs. California's 1907 Caminetti Act, often cited as the first state legislation to permit the organization of public junior colleges, in fact only authorized high schools to extend their programs through "postgraduate courses of study." The right of school districts to organize junior colleges, per se, and to allocate public funds on their behalf, was not specifically granted by the California legislature until 1917. Other states took even longer to recognize public junior colleges. The 1917 Kansas law used by such communities as Fort Scott and Garden City to establish junior colleges only authorized the organization of a "two-year course in advance of the course prescribed from accredited high schools." Michigan's 1917 act permitted the organization of "junior collegiate department[s] of district school system[s]," while Minnesota's 1925 legislation allowed for the establishment of "department[s] of junior college work." Not until 1927, when Iowa's legislature finally recognized the dozen or so junior colleges already operating within the state, were school districts specifically authorized to establish "public junior colleges." See Frederick L. Whitney, The Junior College in America, Colorado State Teachers College, Greeley, CO, 1928: 47.

By the early 1920s, some laymen had come to recognize that a distinction could be drawn between a junior college and a postgraduate program, and they were quite willing to criticize schoolmen who attempted to pass a postgraduate program off as a junior college. In 1922, for example, W.H. Person, Mayor of Burlingame, California, objected to the recently authorized San Mateo Junior College on these very grounds. As he argued:

> The Junior College voted on March 31 will be housed in the High School. It will not have Junior College equipment and will be taught by High School teachers in their spare time. This amounts to nothing more than two years of postgraduate High School work. This may be a

of California's earliest and most persuasive junior college advocates, acknowledged that he and his Berkeley faculty would have preferred that these programs were designated as "six-year high schools." However, as he was quick to complain, Stanford University's David Starr Jordan had swayed public sentiment away from this phrase, in favor of "junior college," by playing to the vanity of California's many new and "impressionable" communities. As Starr was certainly sensitive enough to understand, the phrase "junior college" simply had cachet, and cachet mattered to small, aspiring communities seeking every advantage in setting themselves apart as communities of enlightenment and civic virtue.

Even if Joliet Junior College may not have been America's "first," its development does provide helpful insights into the years of trial-and-error that proceeded the formal organization of a great many early junior colleges. Franklin Bresler, an early colleague of J.

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good thing, but why call it a Junior College when it is not?
See The Burlingame (CA) Advance, 7 April 1922. For Pearson, a "real" junior college would have operated on a county-wide basis, with its own governing board, facilities, and faculty.

Alexis F. Lange, "The Junior College, with Special Reference to California," Proceedings of the National Education Association (Ann Arbor, MI: 1915), 120.

Stanley Brown's at Joliet, described in considerable detail the evolutionary -- not revolutionary -- character of Joliet's junior college. For Bresler:

> Such expressions as "established," "formed," and "came into existence" convey a wholly erroneous impression concerning the conditions at Joliet... The writings of recognized authorities in this field give the impression that after due consideration the school authorities decided to establish a junior college at Joliet in 1902. It is clear that no such well-defined intention existed in 1902 and just as clear that the 'postgraduate' work carried on in that year differed very little from that offered by the school in the years immediately preceding and immediately following it....In truth the college evolved -- it was not 'established,' 'formed,' or begun at any particular date.[28]

Local records support Bresler's characterization of Joliet Junior College's slow, often tentative, and incremental development. As early as 1884, the city's high school had added collegiate-grade chemistry and Latin to its curriculum, and in 1898 the school secured an early form of accreditation for these courses from the University of Michigan. By 1901 (the year that Joliet's school board ostensibly organized a junior college) some 22 postgraduate students were already enrolled in a variety of college courses, and their number grew steadily

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[28] Roosevelt Bresler, "A Plan for Re-Designing the Curriculum of the Joliet Junior College" (Ed.D diss., Teachers College, 1945), 20.

through this century's first decade.[9] Yet it would not be until 1913, Bressler noted, that the phrase "junior college" first appeared in school records, and then only in the minutes of Joliet's faculty meetings. Not until 1916 did the term gain wider usage and the school board formally separate the junior college from the high school. As part of this reorganization, the Joliet board segregated the records of junior college students from those of high school students and placed oversight of the junior college curriculum in the hands of a special faculty committee. In 1917, the junior college moved into its own wing of Central High, at last winning exclusive use of laboratories and recitation rooms.[10]

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[9] It should be noted that Thomas Deam has contended that Joliet's first college-level course, in advanced physics, was not offered until 1900. However, Susan H. Wood provides convincing evidence that the school's postgraduate program was well-established by this date, and would grow so large by 1902 that Brown felt it necessary to secure specific board approval to legitimize expenditures on behalf of these students. See Susan H. Wood, The People's Legacy: A History of Joliet Junior College (Joliet, IL: Joliet Junior College Foundation, 1987), 22. See also Thomas A. Deam, "Evolution of the Joliet Junior College," Junior College Journal 1, no. 7 (1931): 429.

[10] Also in 1916, the Joliet school board petitioned the North Central Association to accredit its junior college. If one is compelled to date the founding of Joliet Junior College, 1916 would seem to possess a far better claim than 1901, 1902, or 1913.

The "founding" of Chicago's public junior colleges provides a second example of the evolutionary development of the early junior college. Following the lead of Kansas City, Detroit, and other large, Midwestern school systems, Chicago's school board authorized postgraduate programs at two of its technical high schools -- Crane and Lane -- in 1911 and added a third postgraduate program at the smaller Senn High School in 1914.[31] Through 1916, these postgraduate programs operated as departments of their respective high schools. Only in 1916, and then most

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[31] It is not at all clear that the courses offered by these three postgraduate programs were of a collegiate level and for this reason none will be included in the inventory of junior colleges found in Chapter II. We do know that they were intended, according to Chicago school superintendent Ella Hogg Young, to provided recent immigrants, mostly Russian Jews, who could not meet university admission requirements with "advanced technical training beyond that now offered in the technical high schools of Chicago." Also, the addition of the postgraduate programs at Crane and Lane was part of a more general reorganization of the technical curriculum at Crane and Lane. To make room for the postgraduate programs (and, apparently, to avoid the expense of buying new equipment) the two high schools were to cease offering technical programs to their freshmen and sophomores. However, at least at Crane this early form of a modern-day "2-plus-2" program was abandoned in 1913 as unworkable. As noted in the Superintendent's report for that year, high school junior and seniors would "not leave the local schools to enter the technical schools for the last two years of the [technical] course, as the school ties are too difficult to break." Quoted in Smolich, "Origins and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 221.

likely as an economy measure, these programs were merged on the Crane High School campus and reorganized as the ill-fated Crane Junior College. In contrast to the city's earlier experiments with postgraduate technical education, Crane's offerings were of strict collegiate grade, accredited by the University of Illinois, and offered through four departments: engineering, pre-medical, pre-legal, and liberal arts.[24]

As evidenced by the origins of Joliet and Crane Junior Colleges, the conventional chronology has failed to capture the spirit of the junior college's incremental -- even uncertain and tentative -- development within the larger setting of a rapidly evolving public school. Chronologies such as Parker and Bailey's wrongly imply a history of fixed and certain dates, with both causes and their effects neatly aligned. But the historical record, as we have seen with Joliet and Chicago, argues for a chronology open to a more complex sequence of events, involving a far wider range of actors and influences than one or two university presidents and some vague impulse toward egalitarian reform. A more accurate and complete chronology must look first to the communities that gave

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[24] Board of Education, Report of the Superintendent of Schools to the Committee on Survey (Chicago: 1917), 2.

life and direction to the public junior college. It must not only incorporate the widespread and varied experimentation by public high schools with collegiate-level instruction that began in the late nineteenth century but also identify those moments when, in such communities as Joliet, Fort Scott, Kansas, and San Francisco, the junior college's local advocates successfully marshaled their political forces and transformed this experimentation into permanent institutions of well-defined purpose.

2. Weighing the Evidence

Historians of the American university are accustomed to working from a body of readily accessible primary sources, often well catalogued and retained under an archivist's supervision.[11] Except where fire or some other calamity has intervened (as, for example, in the case of Illinois's Bradley University) most university archives preserve a substantial body of primary sources: a legislative charter, complete board minutes, past and

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[11] In this regard, America's universities and senior colleges are not unique. They, like most other American institutions, are heirs to Winks's "historically minded" Puritan forebears, maintaining a "magnificent system of national, state, and local archives across the United States." See Robin W. Winks, The Historian as Detective (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1968), xix.

current regulations governing student decorum and scholarship, annual reports and commencement addresses, and the occasional public pronouncement of the college president on some matter of special moment. These sources tend not only to resolve most questions of chronology, they also lessen the historian's dependence upon institutional memory, unverified testimony, and other, equally unreliable sources of evidence.

In contrast, the historian who wishes to explore the origins of the early public junior college will quickly learn that archival preservation has never been a priority on most two-year college campuses.[4] Few maintain formal archives, and any reconstruction of the record is furthered hampered by the fact that up until 1960, the typical junior college did not operate as a free-standing institution, governed by an independent board, but functioned as a department of a comprehensive high school, which was, in turn, a subdivision of a unified or

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[4] Witt, America's Community Colleges, xviii. Waldo Adams, who attempted one of the earliest histories of the short-lived junior college at Goshen, Indiana, experienced this problem first hand. While he was convinced that the city's experiment with higher education had closed by 1911, he could not document this fact, since "local school records were not available." See Waldo Adams, "The Junior College at Goshen, Indiana," Junior College Journal 4, no. 2 (1933): 71- 77.

consolidated school district. As a rule, a school district's governing board consisted of just five or seven lay members, with oversight for educational programs encompassing everything from a kindergarten to recreational adult programs. The time and energy that such a small, lay board could reasonably devote to a junior college, which might enroll just 75 of a district's 5,000 students, was invariably limited by the demands of its grammar and high schools.

R. Clark McVie's review of the minutes of Iowa's Red Oak school board between 1918 and 1950 reveals the degree of inattention afforded most junior college by their sponsoring boards. As he found, the Red Oak board all but ignored its small junior college, among the first established in Iowa, even as it debated ad nauseam the most trivial of matters affecting its grammar and high schools. As he observed:

> To me the fascinating thing is that there was no record in the minutes of the Board of Education of whether the college was or was not in operation. There was a long and detailed account of the "hassle" over whether to pay Sally Jones $125.00 per month or $127.50 per month with a long list of the patrons who had spoken for and against this decision. [But] nothing about the Junior College.[11]

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[11] R. Clark McVie, personal correspondence, 2 March 1982. In this regard, California represents an important

Confronted by the challenge of sketchy and often inaccessible school board minutes, and unaccustomed to working with other local sources, junior college historians have chosen to base their work on a small canon of secondary sources. Seemingly by default, these sources -- including the works of Lange and Koos, various publications of the federal Bureau of Education, and the unrefereed journal of the American Association of Junior Colleges -- have assumed the role of a surrogate historical record. While understandable, the reliance of junior college historians on these secondary sources has come at a significant price, distorting our understanding of the number and success of the earliest junior college initiatives.

Eells's claim that public junior colleges were operating in Philadelphia, St. Joseph, Joliet, Goshen, and Saginaw as early as 1910 highlights the extent of this problem." In support of his claim, Eells cites no

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exception. Under California's 1921 Junior College Act, communities were permitted to establish free-standing junior college districts, governed by independent governing boards. While the minutes of these boards represent an extraordinary source of information about early junior colleges, they must be seen for what they are -- exceptions to the general rule.

" Eells, The Junior College, 55-56.

local records as evidence, but only a brief School Review article authored by Joliet's J. Stanley Brown.[1] Had Eells looked beyond this one article and examined local school and community records, he would have arrived at a very different finding. As these records reveal, only three of the five communities Brown cited -- Joliet, Goshen, and St. Joseph -- established a junior college, and it is anachronistic to date the founding of either Joliet or St. Joseph before 1915, much less 1910. As we have already discussed, Joliet's school board did not reorganize its postgraduate program into a junior college per se until 1916, while St. Joseph's junior college developed out of an established postgraduate program in 1915. Only Goshen operated what can be regarded as a junior college, yet it should not have been counted among operating junior colleges in 1915. Opening in 1904, Goshen's "six year high school" had ceased operation by 1911.

Of Brown's two other communities, neither would establish a junior college, although both did experiment with some form of postgraduate schooling. In the case of

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[1] J. Stanley Brown, "Present Development of Secondary Schools According to the Proposed Plan," School Review 13 (January, 1905): 15-18.

Saginaw, the school district's superintendent, E. C. Warriner, described his school's postgraduate program at a 1905 meeting of Michigan school officials.[48] The program, then being operated at his city's East Side High School, included offerings in Latin, trigonometry, and algebra. According to Warriner, the program had been in operation since 1897 and was popular with students. However, for reasons that are not entirely clear, just two years after Warriner's comments East High's postgraduate program was terminated, and there is no record of any subsequent attempt to establish a junior college in this Michigan city.

But it is Brown's reference to a junior college in Philadelphia that most clearly demonstrates the risk of accepting the accuracy of unverified recollection at face value. As early as 1903, one can find evidence of considerable interest among the faculty, alumni, and administrators of Philadelphia's Central High School in appending a postgraduate program to their school's conventional four-year curriculum. As will be more fully described in Chapter IV, between 1904 and 1912, Central

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[48] Edward A. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, 1880-1920 (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1964), 164.

High's principal, Robert Ellis Thompson, repeatedly petitioned Philadelphia's school board to permit the addition of a postgraduate department to Central's academic program.[19] Each of these proposals, despite its support, was rejected by Philadelphia's school board. Faced with limited resources, the city's school board chose to expand its four-year high schools rather than commit funds to an untested program which would benefit only a relative handful of high school graduates.

While certainly no justification for the uncritical use of secondary sources, the general inaccessibility and uneven quality of early twentieth century school records have seriously complicated the work of junior college historians. But their reluctance to pursue other sources of reliable evidence has left them unable to ascertain even the most basic facts about the vast majority of early junior colleges, much less discern the motives and interests of their sponsors. Fortunately, other repositories of reliable evidence, much of it primary source material, are available which can fill this evidentiary gap: state library archives, public records

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[19] Philadelphia Board of Education, Ninety-First Annual Report (Philadelphia: 1909), 128-129 and Philadelphia Board of Education, Ninety-Third Annual Report (Philadelphia: 1912), 160.

maintained by local historical societies, county libraries, and newspaper morgues. By combining school records with evidence drawn from these sources, we will offer an explanation of the public junior college's rapid emergence early in this century that does not rely upon the recollections of a few prominent educators, but draws instead directly upon the recorded experience of the institutions themselves and of the communities that gave these institutions life and direction.[4]

3. Logical Sufficiency

A consistent and reasonable logic represents the third standard against which we will set the junior college literature. To meet this standard, one would reasonably expect this literature to be free of unfounded assumptions and overt fallacies, just as one would expect it to balance any pursuit for a first cause with a concern for those sufficient conditions that explain why

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[4] Eells's 1930 bibliography of the junior college literature, the first truly comprehensive bibliography in the field, reflected the antipathy of junior college historians to local sources that has prevailed to this day. Cited in the bibliography were the writings and publications of prominent schoolmen, state agencies, and some major urban school districts. Eells specifically excluded all local sources, such as college catalogues and local histories, but most importantly all articles "from the daily press." See, Walter Crosby Eells, Bibliography on Junior Colleges, Office of Education, Bulletin, no. 2 (Washington, DC: 1930), vi-vii.

public junior colleges, once initial enthusiasm for this schooling innovation had passed, steadily grew in number and public acceptance over a span of four decades.

As we will argue, the literature fails to meet this standard of logic on both counts. Not only can junior college historiography be faulted for its uncritical acceptance of unfounded assumptions, it can be criticized for its single-minded pursuit of the holy grail of a first cause. This pursuit has come at the expense of a more complete and satisfactory explanation of the junior college that not only considers those conditions which influenced a particular community's sponsorship decision, but which also identifies those conditions that then sustained these institutions over a period of 40 years.

Chief among the junior college literature's untested assumptions is the belief that school boards purposely established these institutions as an egalitarian alternative to the elitism of established colleges and universities. It was through the junior college, this assumption holds, that America made good on its democratic ideals, guaranteeing disadvantaged, academically ill-prepared, but otherwise worthy young people access to an education to which they would have been denied by the likes of Yale, Princeton, and

Columbia. The power that animated this new educational form, and was essential to its widespread adoption, derived directly from the American people's altruistic spirit and egalitarian values.[4] As Ralph Fields observed:

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[4] The main line of junior college historiography, represented by the works of Vaughan and others, has developed an important contrarian literature, largely derived from the seminal works of Burton Clark and L. Steven Zwerling. This contrarian literature, exemplified by Brint and Karabel's The Diverted Dream, has cast the junior college as an anti-democratic institution, created early in this century by American elites intent upon diverting socially and ethnically undesirable students away from the university, even while preserving the rhetoric of a democratic higher education. This literature is not only flawed by its reliance upon secondary sources but by its tendency to ignore contrary evidence.

It is true, in fact, that some nationally-prominent junior college advocates, notably Koos, Eells, and Zook, encouraged junior college to favor "semi-professional" programs at the expense of their university parallel programs. But it is equally true, and something Zwerling, Brint and Karabel, and other like-minded scholars have overlooked, that this encouragement had little effect at the institutional level before 1940. Indeed, calls to vocationalize the junior college were frequently criticized by junior college deans and presidents when they were not simply ignored.

David O. Levine's discussion of the attempt by the University of California's Robert Sproul to use the findings of a legislatively commissioned Carnegie study to limit California's junior colleges to "specialized vocational curricula" reflects the distortions that have resulted from the selective use of sources characteristic of this contrarian literature. For Levine, the report functioned much as a master plan, eventually adopted by other states, to vocationalize the junior college. What he fails to mention is that the deans and presidents of California's junior college were almost universal in their condemnation of the study and that the California legislature, despite its sponsorship of the study, ignored Sproul's calls to implement the Carnegie recommendations.

> The drive to attain a greater degree of democracy in all our social arrangements has been a most important influence. The junior college movement was born during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when democracy and an equal opportunity for all were strongly advocated.[42]

In many junior college histories, the association of the junior college with egalitarian ideals is expressed through a simple dualism.[43] In the years before 1940, the

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For Zwerling, see L. Steven Zwerling, Second Best, McGraw-Hill Book Company, New York, 1976: 41-74; for Clark, see Burton Clark, The Open Door College (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960); for Levine, see David O. Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration: 1915-1940 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986); and for Seashore, see Carl E. Seashore, The Junior College Movement (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1940), 21.

[42] Ralph Fields, The Community College Movement (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1962) 55. Just a year later, Field's Teachers College colleague, Michael Brick, reinforced Field's basic line of reasoning. As described by Brick, the junior college was an "idea" born "[f]rom the struggles to achieve equality of opportunity and to broaden the scope of higher education." While certain university leaders may have played a role in its early organization, for Brick the institution's true impetus came from the "soil of America's cultural, economic and political heritage." Brick's junior college was born of America's Jacksonian belief in individual worth, its acceptance of social mobility, its encouragement of technological innovation, and its willingness to invest in human capital development. See Michael Brick, "The American Association of Junior Colleges: Forum and Focus for the Junior College Movement" (Ph.D. diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 1963), 3-12, 37.

[43] Koos, in developing this dualism, contrasted the small, exclusive and narrow "old" college of the nineteenth century (Amherst provides his example) with the

reasoning typically unfolds, college students fell neatly into two distinct classes. At one extreme were the traditional students: white males, for the most part, born into privileged families and prepared for college at Andover or Boys Latin. Admission to one of the Ivies, Ann Arbor, or Stanford was virtually assured, and once in college, this privileged caste concerned itself more with the doings of a frat and the football team than with history or biology. But then, none had any real need to earn more than the "gentlemanly C," for their fortunate births assured them of one day taking their rightful place as captains of industry or, if made of lesser stuff, as doctors or lawyers. These fortunate students benefitted from a closed system of aristocratic schools and colleges, organized to preserve society's elitist structure by passing the status of privileged parents onto their children, and onto their children exclusively.

"new" comprehensive junior college "cast in terms of democratization comporting with the trends, needs, and ideals of our time." See Leonard Koos, "Rise of the People's College," School Review 55, no. 3 (March, 1947): 139-149. More than 30 years later, Leland Medsker would echo essentially the same theme, describing the junior college's "strategic role" as that of being "the most effective democratizing agent in higher education." See Leland Medsker, The Junior College: Progress and Prospect (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1960), 33.

At the other extreme, we are told, was the typical junior college freshman. He -- or she -- differed from freshmen at Yale, Williams, and Michigan in all material respects. This student was both unable to afford the expense of a traditional college and had been ill-prepared by a large, factory-like public high school for the intellectual rigors of an exclusive college or university.[44] For him or her, the junior college was a low-cost, proximate alternative to the aristocratic schools of the privileged, and, depending upon the particular ideological bent of the historian, it served either as an isthmus to opportunity or as a diabolical diversion that at once mollified the aspirations of lower class students even as it insulated elite institutions from any pressure to democratize their student bodies.

While a fixture of most junior college histories, does the historical record corroborate the presumption that the junior college's defining purpose was to provide less affluent and poorly skilled students with access to higher education? Fortunately, in forming our answer we have the benefit of a substantial body of research from the early part of this century that closely examined the

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[44] Witt, America's Community Colleges, 46.

"economic selectivity" of both junior and senior colleges, and of the high schools from which both drew their students. We can also turn to various local sources -- school records, newspaper accounts, and college histories -- for additional insight into both the class origins and attendant social values of early junior college students.

At first glance, it would seem a reasonable presumption that early public junior colleges were democratic in their social composition. After all, as Charles Monroe has observed, the "major root" of the junior college is to be found in the egalitarian public high school, leading one to infer that the junior college shared the high school's commitment to provide all youth with a free, comprehensive, and accessible education.[45] But several studies, completed between 1920 and 1935, suggest that neither public high schools nor their closely associated junior colleges were especially democratic in the social composition of their student bodies. Such, for example, was the finding of George S. Counts's landmark study, "The Selective Character of American Secondary Education."[46] This comparison of the social status of

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[45] Monroe, Profile of the Community College, 10.

[46] George S. Counts, "The Selective Character of American Secondary Education," Supplementary Educational

public high school students to the population at large, published in 1922, found that despite their remarkable enrollment growth after 1900, public high schools remained highly selective in terms of their students' social status. Even though the 1920 census found that just 20 percent of American families were headed by a proprietor, professional, or manager, slightly more than 45 percent of high school students studied by Counts came from these elite families. At the same time, while more than 75 percent of American families were headed by someone employed either as a farm worker or in manual labor (including factory work), less than 32 percent of high school students came from these less prestigious families.

Two years later, Leonard Koos extended Counts's study to include a representative sample of students enrolled in public and private junior colleges, state universities, and Harvard College.[4] Koos's data, reproduced below with a summary of Counts's findings as Table 1, demonstrate that the public junior colleges of this period were not only more exclusive than high schools

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Monographs, no. 19 (Chicago: The University of Chicago, 1922).

[4] Leonard Koos, The Junior College, Education Series no. 5 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1924), 134-143.

generally, but that they were very nearly as selective as state universities. Only Harvard students tended to come from higher status families, something that even Koos recognized may have been nothing more than an artifact of regional differences in workforce composition.

Table 1

Distribution Among Occupational Groups, by Percent, Fathers of High School and College Students, 1921-22

Occupation	High School	Junior College	J.C. Soph	College & Univ.	Harvard Freshmen
1. Proprietor	19.8	19.1	17.8	25.1	35.7
2. Professional	9.4	14.0	15.3	20.8	30.3
3. Managers	16.3	16.3	17.8	7.8	5.4
4. Commercial	9.5	9.3	9.6	8.7	8.6
5. Clerical	5.8	3.8	2.8	3.5	2.4
6. Agriculture	2.4	14.2	11.7	22.5	1.4
7. Artisans	4.2	2.8	3.2	2.6	0.3
8. Manual Labor	29.1	15.6	18.3	7.1	6.5
9. Unknown	3.3	4.9	3.6	2.0	9.4

Note: Data on the father's occupation of high school students were reproduced by Koos from Counts's study of high school selectivity.

Koos, although a vocal advocate of the junior college as a democratizing force in American higher, did recognize that broader participation in higher education through the two-year college was a distant and unrealized ideal. He was painfully aware that public junior college

students of the early 1920s in fact differed little in their class origins than their counterparts at elite Eastern institutions, and he reproached junior colleges for failing to modify their admission standards, curriculum, and climate to encourage the enrollment of the less affluent and the academically weak.[42] No less dismayed that junior colleges were failing in this regard was Koos's contemporary, the University of Iowa's Carl E. Seashore. In 1926 Seashore reminded a gathering of junior college leaders that their talk of "education for democracy" did not reach much beyond the top five percent of the nation, and that there was too little concern for the needs of "small merchants, the farmers, the elementary and primary teachers, the crafts and tradesmen, and all their wives."[43]

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[42] Koos, The Junior College, 104-105.

[43] Carl Seashore, Problems in Education (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press,, 1927), 60-61. With the onset of the Great Depression, advocates of an egalitarian junior college grew even more forceful in their calls for the institution to promote greater social justice. Goodwin Watson, of Teachers College, expressed this view in a speech given during the 1935 convention of the American Association of Junior Colleges:

> It is the great task of this generation to substitute for the outworn profit-centered system a society of social-economic planning which will give work for all, produce plenty for all, and give to everyone a share in the control of matters which affect his life. This basic purpose should

In the face of Koos's findings, and the criticism of junior colleges they invited, one might still contend that the social exclusivity of these institutions was entirely unintended, being an inadvertent consequence of the deeply rooted inequalities of the era. After all, it could be argued, junior colleges could not compel the attendance of historically by-passed youth. From this perspective, the social selectivity of the junior college could be explained away as yet another sad example of the victory of regressive social forces over an institution's progressive rhetoric, policies, and practices.

This line of argument can be easily tested. If, as James Ratcliff has recently argued, "[f]rom as far back as 1914, the community college commitment to open admissions and access to higher education has been of paramount importance," we should reasonably expect that at least some sponsoring school boards would have adopted one or more policies to lower long-standing barriers to college

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permeate the whole life and curriculum of the junior college. It can do so only to the extent that those of us who are teachers are also engaged as citizens in this significant struggle.

See "Minutes and Committee Reports," Junior College Journal 5, no. 8: 470.

attendance.* Among their options, these boards might have reduced academic prerequisites to admission, lessened the direct costs of attendance, or expanded the curriculum to include compensatory programs and services for those students deficient in basic pre-collegiate skills because of an inadequate high school preparation.

The historical record provides more than convincing evidence that public junior college adopted very few policies that would have made their institutions more open and accessible to "new" students. Indeed, it seems to have been the case that more than a few junior colleges actually raised the bar. In the case of admission prerequisites, for example, junior colleges universally imposed standards as strict, or even stricter than those of the most prestigious Eastern colleges. As we learn from the 1928 edition of the College Yearbook, just as an applicant to Yale was expected to present a high school diploma and 15 units (or "points") of academically appropriate high school work, so too were applicants to Texarkana Junior College and Iowa's Burlington College. In

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* James L. Ratcliff, "Seven Streams in the Historical Development of the Modern Community College," in A Handbook on the Community College in America (New York: Greenwood Press, 1994), 13.

fact, the college with the highest total point requirement for admission listed in the 1928 College Yearbook was a public junior college: Independence Junior College. This small Kansas junior college required 17 academic units of applications seeking admission in full standing.

Admittedly, public junior colleges were not entirely free to set their admission prerequisites, since the universities of this era only extended accreditation to those junior colleges with admission standards no less rigorous than their own. This practice undoubtedly had the effect of restricting the pool of potential students from which a junior college might draw. To require applicants to have completed a high school program of at least 15 points distributed among the traditional academic subjects, as was the norm, was to effectively preclude many rural students, whose small high schools lacked the faculty to offer a program of the required breadth, and any student enrolled in an industrial or commercial program.

Moreover, we find that the junior colleges of this era had little option but to adhere to prevailing

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[1] William Hurt Huber, The College Blue Book, 2nd ed. (Hollywood-by-the-Sea, FL: The College Blue Book, 1928), 206.

university admissions standards, since their accreditors, whether state universities or one of the regional associations, closely monitored institutional compliance through regular site visits. Evidence of the strict oversight under which public junior colleges operated before 1940 can be found in the report of the University of Illinois's Committee on Higher Education Institutions summarizing its 1928 visit to Iowa's Burlington Junior College.[4] Among a number of items, the university's small team of inspectors reported in detail on their examination of the credentials of Burlington's entire enrollment of 97 students. Fortunately for Burlington, 92 of its students had satisfied Illinois's relatively lax entrance requirement of 14 high school units. But three students had completed only 13, while two had completed just 12. While noting these infractions of its university's admissions standard, the Illinois team chose not to impose sanctions upon Burlington for its missteps.[5] However, the

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[4] University of Illinois, "Report of the Committee on Higher Education Institutions," mimeographed (Urbana: 1929).

[5] Burlington's biology department did not fare so well. It appears that the junior college's one lecturer in biology had not completed his master's degree, although he was "close" to finishing his thesis. The Illinois inspectors deemed him unqualified and determined that one of his courses could not be transferred to the university

inspectors did use the opportunity to lecture the college's administration, impressing upon it that all of Burlington's applicants who were ineligible for university admission should either be tutored privately or required to complete their high school deficiencies before being permitted to embark upon a collegiate course of study.

As Frederick Whitney found, there was nothing unusual about Burlington Junior College's experience with university accreditors.[4] The latitude of junior colleges to circumvent the dictates of their academic overseers was extremely limited -- the junior college that knowingly disregarded university standards and admitted unqualified students placed its academic standing at grave risk, as Chicago's Crane Junior College learned in 1930. During a routine visitation, a team of North Central accreditors found that the college was offering remedial courses in English to students whose high school records would not qualify them for admission to the University of Illinois.[5] Both for its lax admissions practices and its addition of sub-collegiate courses to its curriculum,

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for credit until his degree was awarded.

[4] Whitney, The Junior College in America, 66.

[5] "Crane Junior College," The Junior College Journal 1, no. 4 (1931): 205.

Crane's North Central accreditation was promptly suspended. Crane's officials did not challenge North Central's findings or its suspension, instead quickly agreeing to discontinue remedial courses and to strengthen its pre-admissions testing program, even though these actions drastically curtailed access to Crane at the height of the Great Depression.[1] When forced to choose between nominally egalitarian policies and the security of accreditation, Crane chose the latter. For this, the junior college was rewarded with re-accreditation by North Central in June, 1931.

At the same time, it would be wrong to leave the impression that early junior colleges adopted strict admissions standards solely in response to external pressure. Many of these colleges freely adopted entrance requirements even more stringent than the minima required by their accrediting association or university accreditors. As late as 1917, for example, Joliet Junior College not only required 15 high school units for admission, but stipulated that applicants come from the top third of their high school class.[2] And in

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[1] "Crane College Reinstated," The Junior College Journal 1, no. 9 (1931): 566.

[2] Brooks, "The Junior College," 49.

California, it was not even enough to merely pass the required academic courses. The prospective college student also was required to receive at least a "B" (what was termed a "recommended grade") to gain admission to a junior college's certificate program. Those applicants who did not meet this higher standard could be admitted only to a diploma program, which offered relatively low-level vocational training and did not allow for university transfer.

The presumption that America's early junior colleges catered to the poor and academically marginal student is also based on the misinformed belief that the direct cost of a junior college education was substantially less than the cost of university attendance. As the Carnegie Council argued in 1975, in its attempt to justify a national policy of low tuition:

> The concept of the "two years of free access" to higher education in the United States has a long history, dating back to some of the first public

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See Frederick J. Weersing, "Misconceptions Regarding the Junior College," Junior College Journal 1, no. 6 (1931): 365-368. Ontario, California's Chaffey College went even a step further, stipulating that applicants to its class of 1923 not only present 15 units of acceptable high school work, but that they also demonstrate "evidence of high moral character and earnestness of purpose." Janet McCrea, "History of Chaffey College," Chaffey College Historical Collection, mimeographed (1971), 7.

junior colleges established in the early years of the present century.[59]

A careful review of the historical record gives a very different picture of the cost of college attendance by institutional type before 1940. Although public junior colleges operated under the sponsorship of free high schools, most charged tuition, and many charged substantial fees in addition to tuition.[60] Indeed, as

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[59] The Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education, The Feasibility of a National Policy for the First Two Years of College (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1975), 2.

[60] A survey of 150 public junior colleges by the U.S. Bureau of Education found that nearly two-thirds charged tuition. Most that did not were located in California, and were prohibited from charging tuition by state law. See Walter J. Greenleaf, The Cost of Going to College, Pamphlet No. 52 (Washington, DC: Bureau of Education, 1934). More typical of the general practice were the junior colleges of Oklahoma. As Cotton reported in 1928, of Oklahoma's 26 junior colleges, only two -- those sponsored by Muskogee and Ponca City -- were tuition-free for local residents. Many schoolmen argued against the establishment of public junior colleges specifically on the grounds that they could only be sustained through tuition revenue, which ran counter to their belief in the principle of "the free, public school." In his exceptionally detailed 1930 study of the potential for communities in Arkansas to support public junior colleges, Charles Prall concluded that barring substantial tuition charges or "healthy" increases in property valuations (an unlikely prospect in 1930), "the establishment of a junior college [in Arkansas] should be indefinitely postponed." See Maurice Cotton, "The Local Public Junior College in Oklahoma" (master's thesis, University of Oklahoma, 1929), and Charles Prall, "Report of the Junior College Survey Committee," The Journal of Arkansas Education 9, no. 2

reflected in Table 2, it was not at all uncommon in some states for public junior college students to face substantially higher tuition charges if they enrolled in their local junior college than if they attended their state university. Moreover, for at least two state universities -- Texas and Oklahoma -- room and board charges were so nominal that a student realized no cost advantage at all by choosing to attend his or her local junior college.

Of course, in the inflated economy of the late twentieth century, an annual tuition of $90 would pose no barrier to any but the poorest student. But even in the context of the relatively prosperous 1920s, an annual tuition of $90 or $100 -- far less than actually charged by several junior colleges -- could represent a significant drain on family income. In 1928, the typical skilled worker earned just $125 monthly, while agricultural and industrial workers earned substantially less. Making matters even more difficult for the poor student, public junior colleges rarely offered scholarships, nor did they have anything comparable to

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(November, 1930): 20.

university eating halls that could provide a student with the opportunity to work his or her way through college.

Table 2

Resident Tuition and Fee Charges,
Selected State Universities and Junior Colleges, 1928[1]

Arizona	
University of Arizona	$30.00
Phoenix Junior College	$60.00
Iowa	
University of Iowa	$90.00
Burlington Junior College	$100.00
Mason City Junior College	$60.00
Sheldon Junior College	$105.00
Oklahoma	
University of Oklahoma	$0.00
Okmulgee Junior College	$125.00
McAlaster Junior College	$200.00
Texas	
University of Texas	$30.00
Brownsville Junior College	$152.00
South Park Junior College	$145.00
Temple Junior College	$200.00

[1] Tuition figures are for in-district or, in the case of state universities, in-state students and are taken from Huber, The College Blue Book, 2nd ed., 1928.

Eells was not alone among the early junior college's advocates in complaining about the dependence of public junior colleges upon tuition revenue, but he was equally aware that there was little he could do to change this practice when neither state nor federal governments felt any particular obligation to promote universal access to higher education through direct tuition subsidies.[54]

The last refuge for those who would identify the early junior college with an egalitarian ideology would be the student culture. If junior college students were generally of socially disadvantaged backgrounds, one might reasonably expect that they would have precious little time to expend on the diversions of an extra-curriculum. After all, simply to meet their tuition expenses, let alone the cost of books and transportation, one would

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[54] Eells ruefully observed that public junior colleges in only four states were tuition free for local residents: California, Arizona, Kansas, and North Carolina. See, Walter C. Eells, "The Junior College at the Detroit Convention," Junior College Journal 1 no.7: 438. Eells's comments are noteworthy because they call into question the factual basis of Levine's argument that a conscious policy of charging little or no tuition at junior colleges was part of a more general policy to use these institutions to divert poor and disadvantaged students away from more expensive universities. In support of his thesis, Levine claims that junior colleges in eight states, not Eells's four, were tuition-free. However, Levine fails to list the eight. See Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 175.

expect that these students devoted all of their free time employed in some marginal job or working on a local farm. Such students would have neither the means nor the leisure time to imitate the student culture of the university, with its exclusive clubs, fraternities and sororities, athletic teams, and active social life.

The record shows such a presumption to be ill-founded. There is more than ample evidence that the student culture of the typical pre-1940 junior college was no less self-absorbed and self-indulgent than the student cultures at Stanford, Ann Arbor, Berkeley, and Minneapolis. Team sports proved particularly popular on junior college campuses, despite the practical problems posed by the often great distances separating junior colleges. Equally favored were student newspapers, drama and literary societies, and even orchestras. And beyond these institutionally-sponsored teams and clubs, junior college students regularly organized elaborate social gatherings -- "galas" was the term most often used to describe them on the society pages of local newspapers. These events involved virtually all students and many faculty in activities that clearly set junior college students apart as something of a youthful social elite.

Frequent press reports of student-sponsored activities at Fort Scott Junior College, appearing virtually from the college's founding, provide us with insight into the social exclusivity of the early junior college's student culture. Within a year of the school's opening in 1919, the theatrical productions, club meetings, and social events of the college's small student body had become a regular fixture of the Fort Scott Tribune's society page. Athletics took hold at the junior college a year or two later, and by 1922, the Tribune published a regular column highlighting the triumphs and defeats of the school's various teams. Interestingly, and suggestive of the students' elitism, Fort Scott's first organized team was not in football or basketball, but the decidedly more exclusive sport of tennis.[63]

But athletics actually made up only a small part of the extra-curriculum at Fort Scott. Those students with a desire to write had the Scribbler Society, with its frequent and elaborate private banquets, while those with

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[63] "Sports News," Fort Scott Tribune 16 October 1922. Fort Scott's students were not alone in beginning organized sports with tennis. The 105 students who constituted Yakima Junior College's inaugural class of 1928 also first competed, apparently intramurally, in tennis before taking up basketball in 1932. See Maurice Helland, Our Valley, too, Yakima, WA, 1976: 132.

in an interest in dramatics began producing plays on a regular basis from the school's first semester. More than any other feature of the extra-curriculum, the students' choice of theatrical productions (such as the extremely well-received "Abu Sam of Old Japan") reflected that peculiar combination of a fascination with the distant cosmopolitan world and a remarkably insensitive racial stereotyping that appears to have characterized the culturally isolated elites of this era's small cities and towns.

But it was the students' elaborate seasonal socials which most clearly reveal the exclusive character of their extra-curriculum and the relative prosperity of the group.[64] In 1922, the Tribune reported that both freshmen and sophomores had gathered at a student's country home

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[64] Fort Scott's extra-curriculum was in no sense exceptional. In an extraordinary article, "The Thrill of College Life," Charles F. Van Cleve, Dean of Lyons Township Junior College, described an extra-curriculum at his college that included a "Sweethearts' Ball," a lavish Halloween gala, a student review ("College Capers") and a Spring-time candle ceremony, "symbolic of learning." At Yakima Junior College, Helland reports that the college's dean, Ms. Elizabeth Prior, "believed in supplementing education with social activities. Dances and parties were scheduled regularly. One of the highlights of the year was the "Harvest Home" dinner..." See Charles Van Cleve, "The Thrill of College Life," Junior College Journal 5, no. 3, (1934): 151-152 and Helland, Our Valley, 132.

for a Halloween gala.[65] The affluence of those attending is apparent in the details. The house was large, accommodating more than 70 students, it had been elaborately made over in the manner of a haunted house, and the students arrived in a caravan of cars. The details also reveal the students' upper class tastes and the concern for propriety then common among the era's "better" classes.[66] The evening's most popular game was "Fox Hunt," and after bobbing for apples, the students concluded their festivities with group singing and refreshments of salted nuts and pumpkin pies. There is no hint of dancing or any other untoward behavior, and the newspaper took care to report that the entire evening's activities were chaperoned by a faculty member and his wife.

In the extent and character of their extra-curriculum, the students of Fort Scott Junior College, much like the students at Lyons Township Junior College,

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[65] "Junior College Frolic," Fort Scott Tribune, 22 October 1922.

[66] Importantly, the extra-curriculum of junior college students only rarely included fraternities or sororities, since they were feared by parents and school boards alike as instigators and havens of sin. Although there is evidence that junior college students desired to organize Greek societies, their wishes were successfully opposed by school boards and administrators. See "Reports and Discussion," Junior College Journal 5, no. 7 (1935): 372.

corroborate the findings of Counts and Koos that public education remained socially exclusive at the level of the upper grades well into the twentieth century. Early junior colleges were elite institutions, made so by their stringent admission requirements and substantial tuition charges, and maintained as such by their student culture. Just as the university students of this time were not all affluent -- one thinks of Stanford's shanty-town residents -- so it appears that public junior colleges drew the overwhelming majority of their students from economically advantaged families. Any attempt to associate the emergence of the junior college with some democratic or progressive ideology is simply unwarranted, however egalitarian the public two-year college may have become following its transformation into the comprehensive community college after 1950.

4. But What of University Influence?

Even if, as has been presumed, early junior colleges were not the egalitarian institutions portrayed by Ratcliff and others, could they still have been the direct outgrowth of the active encouragement and support of university presidents? Might the public junior college have been the effect, with the university its first cause? Should we consider Harper, as McDowell described him in

1919, the "father of the junior college," and should we attribute the rise of the junior college in California, as does David O. Levine, to the advocacy of Stanford's David Starr Jordan and California's Alexis Lange?[1]

In answer to these questions, Michael Stanford's criticism that historians are "far too careless in attributing intention and effect" seems especially apt.[2] From the early works of Amos Gray, William Proctor, and Walter Crosby Eells, the cornerstone of junior college history has been the simplest of causal relationships. Somehow, we are to believe, Harper, Jordan, and their peers communicated a desire for a new schooling order to several hundred local school boards, each of which then dutifully set about to establish a junior college.[3] Some

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[1] F. M. McDowell, The Junior College, Bulletin no. 35 (Washington, DC: Bureau of Education, 1919), 11. See also Vaughan, The Community College Story, 4, and Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 174.

[2] Stanford, Historical Knowledge, 69.

[3] A. A. Gray's thesis, written in 1915, was the first extended work on the public junior college to tie the origins of the junior college directly to presidents of America's new research universities. Gray described the junior college as an outgrowth of the reform initiatives sponsored by prominent Midwestern university presidents. Prompted by an enlightened desire to restructure American schooling along Continental lines, Gray argued, Minnesota's Folwell, Missouri's Ross, and Chicago's Harper conceived of the junior college as a means to both rid their universities of onerous parietal responsibilities

junior college historians, notably Brick, Fields, and Zwerling, have suggested a somewhat more complex causal relationship, arguing that university leaders represented the junior college's first cause, with either American egalitarianism or the class interests of America's economic elite subsequently providing the junior college's necessary cause.[11] But in either its basic or more sophisticated formulation, does the historical record support this interpretation of cause and effect, or is such reasoning an example of post hoc, propter hoc?

The record unquestionably confirms that a number of university presidents and other prominent schoolmen of the early twentieth century regularly campaigned for a more efficient American schooling system, although with little

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and eliminate instruction that was secondary in method and cultural in purpose. McDowell, in his publication, The Junior College, adopted Gray's basic argument, as did William Proctor in his 1923 history of California's junior colleges. See Eells, Bibliography on Junior Colleges: 47. Also, Arthur Amos Gray, "The Junior College" (master's thesis, The University of California, 1915).

[11] Fields, for one, raised this argument to a broad generalization:

> [I]n the early beginnings of the junior college the major impetus was from the university. The importance of this influence is perhaps best summed up thus: the greatest growth of the junior college took place in those states where the leadership of the university was favorable and dynamic.

Ralph Fields, The Community College Movement, 19.

agreement on a specific strategy to achieve this goal. One reads of proposals to reduce the number of years of elementary schooling, to eliminate course redundancy, even to adopt a three-year baccalaureate. Recommendations calling for the introduction of the junior college were simply part of a more general chorus. The widespread introduction of junior colleges, it was argued by some, would improve the efficiency of schooling by allowing universities to turn their full attention and resources to instruction that was scientific in method and academic in objective.[71]

The junior college's university proponents envisioned an American higher education reorganized into a few, distinctive institutional types, each to be "standardized" around common prerequisites, teaching methods, curriculum, and purposes. As described by President A. Ross Hill of the University of Missouri, the junior college role in this new order was that of university gatekeeper, a staging ground from which the most able students could be efficiently allocated among

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[71] George Zook, "The Junior College," School Review 30 (October, 1922): 582-583. See also Robert J. Leonard, "The Junior College from the Standpoint of the University," Teachers College Record 28 (February 1927): 543-50.

the university's professional schools. Less able students could then be directed away from the university and into occupations more in keeping with their native gifts and talents:

> ...the junior college can act as a selective agency: It can in the course of these two years discover the aptitudes and fundamental abilities of students and direct them toward higher institutions where they can prepare for professional lines. It can determine, if the work is done wisely, the prospects of the students for some special branch.
>
> There are a good many students who do not spend more time in college life than two years, a much larger number than we have ever confessed to ourselves, and the junior college can advise these people as to a career based on this amount of preparation...The junior college, public or private, furnishes a natural stopping point.[12]

But what evidence supports the presumption of some direct tie between the proposals of Harper, Jordan, and their university peers and the decision of several hundred school boards to sponsor a junior college? As the record suggests, this presumption can be challenged on several counts. Most obviously, this view rests on the belief that Harper, Jordan, and the other prominent university presidents of this era were effective agents of change -- that their calls for reform prompted fundamental and

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[12] Quoted in George Zook, ed., National Conference of Junior Colleges, Bureau of Education Bulletin, no. 19 (Washington, DC: 1922), 20.

lasting changes in institutional practice. Yet at best, the track record of these presidents, and especially that of Harper and Jordan, in bringing enduring reform to their own campuses, much less to higher education generally, can be most charitably characterized as uneven. One finds one example of such ineffectiveness in the 1929 proposal of President Goodnow of the Johns Hopkin's to reclaim something of Daniel Coit Gilman's original vision for his university through the discontinuance of the Hopkins freshman and sophomore years. All the encouragement and praise of The New Republic for Goodnow's plan notwithstanding, the hope that Amherst would willingly limit itself to junior college work in collaboration with newer public junior colleges simply placed too much faith in the vision of one man, despite his position of prominence in the academic community to overcome tradition, vested interests, and the simple economics of higher education.[1]

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[1] "Johns Hopkins Drops the College," The New Republic 42 (March 25, 1925): 113-115. Whatever the pedagogical merits of a restructuring of American higher education along Continental lines, it made little economic sense for universities and only threatened the hard-won prestige of standard colleges. American universities depended upon underclassmen to fill beds and for tuition income to offset the high cost of graduate programs. Except in Missouri, college faculties showed no interest at all in "devolving" into junior colleges merely to

In much the same way, within two decades of Harper's death, C.S. Boucher, a dean at the University of Chicago, would use the university's annual report to call for the outright abolition, if not drastic modification, of the university's junior college, just as Jordan's proposal to free his university of responsibility for the first two years of college work by turning these years over to California's larger high schools, was rejected outright by his own faculty as unrealistic and impractical.[4] Even Jordan's successor at Stanford, Raymond Wilbur, fared little better in the quest to create an American university unburdened by freshmen and sophomores, although the proposal was this time rejected by trustees concerned

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please the aspirations of the research universities, and particularly in the East, public junior colleges were simply too few to guarantee universities a sufficient supply of adequately prepared upperclassmen.

[4] Boucher's argument for a fundamental restructuring of undergraduate education at the University of Chicago is found in C.S. Boucher, "The Colleges of Arts, Literature, and Science," President's Report, University of Chicago, 1925-1926, Chicago, 1928: 24-28. That the elimination of Harper's Junior College was at least expected by some is suggested by an editorial in School Life. See "Further Development of the Junior College Seems Inevitable," School Life 12 (June, 1927): 190. The university would wait on the presidency of Robert Maynard Hutchins for growing disillusionment with the Junior College to produce a second major, and unsuccessful attempt at the reform of the conventional undergraduate program. See Robert M. Hutchins, No Friendly Voice (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1936), 78-80.

with the potential financial impact on the university of a loss of tuition income in the midst of a depression. Given the checkered record of even the most prominent university presidents in bringing about fundamental and lasting change in the organization of undergraduate education on their own campuses, it seems entirely unreasonable to believe that a Harper, Jordan, or Goodnow nevertheless successfully persuaded communities over which they exercised no authority whatsoever to expend local tax dollars on a new and untested educational venture to advance what were, at least from the university perspective, entirely self-interested ends.[1]

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[1] Orrin L. Elliott, Stanford University: The First Twenty-five Years (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1937), 518-533.

[1]The junior college literature does not limit its tendency to inflate the influence of university leaders to presidents. Visionary schoolmen -- the likes of Walter Crosby Eells and Leonard Koos -- are also singled out as the instigators of fundamental change in the governance, curriculum, and values of two-year colleges. Yet the influence of these schoolmen at the community level seems no more apparent than that of university presidents. One only needs to consider the outcome of the repeated attempts by Leonard Koos, made at what was seemingly the height of his influence, to realign the whole of public education according to his "6-4-4" plan. Debate over this plan (and its countless variants) may have enlivened the pages of school journals and the annual meetings of the NEA during the latter half of the 1930s, but the plan itself found few takers at the local level. For one of the few balanced discussions of Koos's plan and its major variants, see J. B. Lillard, "The 6-3-3-2 Versus the 6-4-4

However, the single factor that most directly mitigated against the influence of university presidents upon the actions of local school boards was not the limits of their personal effectiveness, but the reality of public school control and governance before 1940. For reasons far more practical than ideological, America's local school districts -- which numbered more than 100,000 as late as 1940 -- were effectively independent of any external oversight and control. Neither state nor federal governments had the will or the means to forge the nation's hodgepodge of school districts into anything approaching a Continental-style school system, all the wishful thinking of some very prominent schoolmen notwithstanding.[1] The mechanisms by which states would come to assert greater control over public education -- consolidation laws, equalization formulas, and uniform

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Plan of Organization for the Public Junior College," School and Society 32(August 1930): 262-64.

[1] One of the most persistent advocates of what was known during the inter-war period as the "European analogy" was Leonard Koos. For Koos, the German and French models of secondary and higher education, with their strong central direction of curriculum and instructional method and, at least in Koos's judgment, their more efficient organization, represented a superior approach to America's highly decentralized and parochial approach to the governance of its schools. See Koos, The Junior College, 342-353

teacher credentialing standards -- were still nascent. Local school boards in the first decades of this century enjoyed enormous latitude, and it was a latitude they were more than willing to exploit as their interests dictated. The number of extra-legal junior colleges, created by school boards without expressed permission in state law, is but one example of the exercise of this latitude.[11]

In this context, with local school boards enjoying a degree of autonomy inconceivable in the late twentieth century, it strains all credibility to believe that nearly 300 towns and cities freely took up the responsibility and expense of a public junior college to advance the reform agenda of George Zook at the Bureau of Education, David Starr Jordan at Stanford, or Leonard Koos at the University of Minnesota. It would seem far more reasonable and likely that a Holton, Kansas, or Burlington, Iowa, established a junior college to advance its own immediate and parochial interests, particularly as its residents -- whether directly or indirectly -- bore virtually all of a junior college's not-inconsequential cost. Given, as we have seen in the particular case of Joliet, that many

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[11] The extra-legal status of many public junior colleges, and the efforts of state legislatures and executive officers to bring these junior colleges under state law, will be discussed more fully in Chapter V.

public junior colleges emerged only after considerable local trial and error, it would seem far more reasonable to begin our search for an explanation of this institution's emergence at the community level, examining the interplay of parochial conditions and interests that led a school board to move beyond experimentation with limited postgraduate programs to sponsor a junior college, than to seek its impetus in the occasional pronouncement of some university president or report of the Bureau of Education, the Commonwealth Foundation, or the NEA's Office of Superintendency. It is in just this direction -- exploring the parochial origins of the junior college in the context of self-directed and self-interested communities -- that this dissertation will turn.

Chapter II

An Inventory of Early Public Junior Colleges

Introduction

The preceding chapter described a junior college historiography compromised by its inaccurate chronology, its dependence upon unverified secondary sources, and its flawed logic. But to whatever degree the chapter may have succeeded in identifying this literature's shortcomings, it failed to offer an alternative explanation of the junior college that would be more accurate, complete, and satisfactory. It will be the purpose of this chapter to take the first step toward satisfying these criteria by laying a sound foundation for a new explanation of the junior college and its origins in the form of a comprehensive inventory of these institutions and their sponsoring communities.

That this step is even necessary reflects the tremendous gaps in our knowledge both of early junior colleges as institutions and of the communities that established them -- a direct consequence of the

preoccupation of junior college historians with questions of ideology described in the opening chapter. Given these gaps, any alternative explanation for the junior college's emergence in more than 250 American communities within a span of just 40 years must wait on the answer to a number of the most basic questions of fact: Exactly how many public junior colleges were established and in what communities? In what years were they organized and how many survived as junior colleges from their inception through 1940? Were these institutions a phenomenon associated in some manner with the development of the western United States, as some have suggested, or is there evidence that they had a broader appeal in regions outside of the West? And most importantly, were junior colleges established in communities of similar size and economic circumstance, or were they distributed across a broad spectrum of communities, from small rural towns to great urban centers?

That these questions have yet to be answered follows directly from the presumptions school historians have brought to their study of this institution. Characterizing the junior college as a national phenomenon best understood through the writings of a few prominent educators, these historians have effectively precluded any

analysis of the junior college's development consistent with Lawrence Cremin's "comprehensive view of education." Those who have written within this literature would have us believe that the junior college was an insular phenomenon, whose impetus derived from that same egalitarian ideology that had earlier inspired the American common school and universal secondary education. For these historians, the revolutionary changes in production, marketing, communication, and transportation that transformed early twentieth century America into an economically and culturally integrated industrial state were irrelevant to the junior college's emergence. We are instead to find its roots in the proverbial little red school house and the exhortations of Horace Mann, and not

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[1] Cremin's influence on the study of public education notwithstanding, junior college historians have held fast to a narrowly instrumentalist perspective for nearly eight decades, as seen in the most recent general history of the two-year college, Witt, et al.'s America's Community Colleges: The First Century. For Witt and his fellow authors, one can best understand the junior college through the prism of its largest national advocacy organization, the American Association of Junior Colleges, and not through the institutions themselves, whose purpose, one must assume, was simply to advance the interests of the association's leaders. The possibility that junior colleges might be best understood in the context of their respective community settings is not even considered. See Lawrence A. Cremin, The Wonderful World of Ellwood Patterson Cubberley (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, 1965), 47-49.

in a world of factories, mechanized farms, and the comprehensive high school.

Morever, the tunnel vision of junior college historians has not only distorted the junior college's relationship to the larger -- and often conflicting -- social and economic forces which fundamentally reshaped American life in the early twentieth century. Just as importantly, it has failed to consider what influence, if any, individual sponsoring communities may have exercised over the junior colleges they established. Were these communities merely the instruments through which a Harper or Jordan achieved personal goals of a "reformed" American education? Or is it possible that a city or town, such as Goshen, Indiana, or Garden City, Kansas, deliberately chose to organize a junior college after a careful weighing of the institution's costs and benefits and of its own parochial interests? Where these communities merely onlookers to a great historical movement, or did the impetus to organize junior colleges originate with them?

The ideological preoccupation of junior college historians has further contributed to the general dearth of basic factual information about early junior colleges in so far as it has influenced their selection of sources.

Consistent with their cosmopolitan bias, these historians have chosen to rely upon the readily accessible and patently progandistic works of Koos, Eells, and their university colleagues as surrogate primary sources in determining the number, rate of growth, and geographic distribution of junior colleges.

However, as we will show, in relying upon such a narrow range of sources, these historians have overlooked a substantial body of widely scattered primary sources -- including local school records, newspaper reports, community histories, and the occasional state survey and dissertation -- that provide a wealth of information on numerous junior colleges entirely overlooked by Koos and Eells. By tapping this new and rich vein of primary sources, it will not only be possible to more fully account for the public junior colleges established between 1900 and 1940, but to open an entirely new avenue of inquiry into the relationship between junior colleges and their sponsoring communities. With the aid of a comprehensive inventory of early junior colleges compiled on the basis of these sources, we will be in a position to better assess the relationship between a community's population, location, and economic circumstance and its decision to sponsor a junior college, and to more

accurately gauge the influence of these conditions upon the exact terms and conditions of such sponsorship.

At this juncture, it must be acknowledged that many junior college historians would question the need for a comprehensive inventory of early public junior colleges that utilizes sources other than the lists and directories of Koos, Eells, and their university colleagues, much less for a collation of this inventory with information on sponsoring communities. These scholars would contend that one or some combination of the contemporary listings

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The California model of junior college sponsorship, embodied in its Junior College Act of 1921, was regularly held out in the Junior College Journal and other publications as something of a norm that other states, over time, came to adopt. But, in fact, no other state could afford the generous level of state aid which was the essential feature of the California governance model. As will be described more fully in subsequent chapters, the form taken by junior college sponsorship varied tremendously from one state to the next, and even within states. At one extreme, some school boards authorized a public junior college without any financial support whatsoever, expecting the college to meet its direct costs through voluntary subscriptions and tuition charges -- much in the manner of a traditional private college. Junior colleges organized in Texas during the 1920s are likely the best example of this type. At the opposite extreme, other school boards even provided junior college students with text books and bus transportation, as if they were still enrolled in a public high school. This was most often the case in California, as one might expect. Although it is beyond the scope of this work, a mapping of public junior colleges between these two poles would greatly enhance our understanding of the real level of local taxpayer support for the public junior college.

should provide a reasonably accurate and complete picture of the number and regional distribution of early junior colleges. To strengthen their case, they would point out that these contemporary listings were compiled by knowledgeable schoolmen, working under the auspices of the U.S. Bureau of Education, a major foundation, or the American Association of Junior Colleges.

Indeed, as suggested by its recent use by John Frye, Walter Crosby Eells's 1941 directory of junior colleges has assumed something of the role of a defacto inventory of the early junior college.[1] However, Eells and the other compilers of early junior college listings would have been among the first to advise against an uncritical acceptance of their work as an accurate representation of the number of early junior colleges, much less as a source of information about sponsoring communities. They knew all too well the limits of their own knowledge about an institution that seemed to grow steadily in number throughout the period without any apparent central direction or control. Koos himself acknowledged his inability to maintain an accurate accounting of the junior

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[1] Frye, The Vision of the Public Junior College, 76. It should be noted that Frye is aware of the limitations of Eells's compilation, and cautions the reader to use this listing with care.

college. To a gathering of schoolmen in 1927, he admitted that at best he could provide only the most general estimate of the number of junior colleges:

> Although no accurate count has been made since [1922], the scattered evidence from various sources gives one the assurance to estimate that in the intervening years this number has mounted to a figure somewhat between eighty and a hundred.[1]

One factor severely limiting the accuracy of these early junior college listings is the methodology that was employed by their compilers. Beginning with McDowell's 1919 list, the approach used in gathering information on the status of junior colleges was remarkably informal. McDowell simply included in his survey the nation's large school districts and those communities which had been mentioned in School Review and similar publications as possible sponsors of a junior college. Koos, for his

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[1] Leonard Koos, "Progress and Problems of the Junior College," in Problems in Education (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1927), 4.

Even more importantly, McDowell does not indicate the number of districts which failed to respond to his survey and may have been operating a junior college, nor does he appear to have considered the problem of terminology, as described in the first chapter, which may have resulted in mis-reporting by his respondents as a result of simple confusion over definitions. As we will discuss more fully later in this chapter, there were as late as 1920 some self-styled "postgraduate" and "six-year high schools" that, by any reasonable standard, should have been included in any listing of junior colleges.

part, preferred to survey state superintendents of education and his colleagues at state universities to gather information on the status of junior colleges for his 1924 list.'

In fairness, these informal approaches to collecting information on junior colleges were necessitated in part by the sheer number of school districts that could have been surveyed (at the time that McDowell prepared his list there were more than 100,000 local school districts in the United States) and by the lack of any central authority in nearly every state to which a McDowell or Koos might have turned for reliable information on the number and location of junior colleges. At a time when state oversight of public education was extremely limited, California state superintendent Will C. Wood's practice of routinely listing his state's junior colleges as part of his annual legislative report was the exception, not the rule. In

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' Koos, The Junior College, 651. Despite his best efforts, Koos did acknowledge that "it is certain that there must still be colleges in existence not to be found in the lists below."

Texas, for example, did not conduct its first survey of its public junior colleges until 1929, by which time 16 junior colleges were already in operation, several dating back to 1925, and one to 1922. Interestingly, the report's listing of Texas's municipal junior colleges overlooked Houston Colored Junior College, organized in 1927 concurrently with the white-only Houston Junior

most states, junior college listings were only compiled on an ad hoc basis, whether by a department of education in response to a specific legislative request or by a graduate student as an appendix to a thesis or dissertation.

College. See Texas Department of Education, Texas Municipal Junior Colleges (Austin: 1929), 10.

The limitations of state-sponsored junior college listings need also to be recognized, even in the case of California. In 1947, when Frank Lindsay attempted to complete a comprehensive inventory of the state's junior colleges, he made no attempt to include any junior college that had closed before 1917. This decision excluded from his inventory those junior colleges closed as a consequence of an unfavorable opinion rendered by the state Attorney General in 1915. See Frank Lindsay, "California Junior Colleges: Past and Present," California Journal of Secondary Education 22, no. 3 (March, 1947): 137.

Iowa's superintendent of public instruction only completed the first list of her state's junior colleges in 1928, in response to the legislature's adoption of a junior college act earlier that year and a full decade after the opening of Mason City Junior College. Our single best source for detailed information about Oklahoma's numerous early junior colleges is Maurice Cotton's master's thesis. Similarly, gaps in our knowledge of Missouri's early junior colleges are only filled in by an extraordinary course outline, prepared by students enrolled in a University of Missouri summer course and preserved in the special collections library of Teachers College. For Iowa, see Agnes Samuelson, Public Junior College (Des Moines: State of Iowa, 1928), 6-7. For Oklahoma, see Maurice Cotton, "The Local Public Junior Colleges in Oklahoma." For Missouri, see William Weston Carpenter and J. Robert Sala, "Junior Colleges of Missouri" (Class project, University of Missouri, 1940).

A second and more significant factor limiting the accuracy of the early junior college listings follows from the underlying purpose they were meant to serve. These listings were compiled by unapologetic advocates of the junior college and were intended first and foremost to highlight the spread of the junior college "idea." Doak Campbell, in a note to the first directory of junior colleges prepared for the Junior College Journal, actually advised readers of his intent and of its potential effect on the accuracy of his directory:

> The list is meant to be inclusive rather than exclusive, and, therefore, it contains the names of some schools which are doing very little junior college work.[1]

While Campbell's honesty may be refreshing, the real difficulty with his self-proclaimed bias toward inclusiveness was not its potential to include the occasional marginal junior college. Rather, his list, like those of his contemporaries, misleads because it was not cumulative. Campbell, like McDowell and Koos, only reported those junior colleges in operation at the time he prepared his directory, so as to avoid any reference to those public junior colleges that had either closed, been

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[1]"Directory of the Junior College, 1931," The Junior College Journal 1, no. 4: 223.

converted to private sponsorship, or been reorganized as a senior college. The more obvious effects of this practice was to mask over junior college "failures" in order to reinforce the impression of the junior college's steady, seemingly unchallenged growth, and, over time, to undercount the total number of public junior colleges. But less obviously, in dropping any reference to junior colleges that failed, whether through closure or reorganization, such list makers as Koos and Eells obscured just how problematic was the fate of a great many individual institutions.

As will be more fully explored in subsequent chapters, a fuller appreciation of the frequency with which public junior colleges either failed outright or were reorganized as a standard college or university is not only central to a fuller understanding of the true range of local interests -- both for and against -- and conditions that influenced the organization of many public junior colleges, but should suggest to the reader that nothing was at all certain or inevitable about this institution's success. As we will see, many junior colleges succumbed to concerted local opposition, while others were closed through the actions of an antagonistic state government. And some - particularly the most

successful – were operated for a relatively short period until their sponsors could arrange for their reorganization as a standard college or even a municipal university. If the junior college were a movement, it was one with as many stops as starts.

One example of the extent to which an uncritical acceptance of pre-1940 junior college directories can distort an understanding of the true complexity of the reaction of sponsoring communities to the earliest public junior college can be found in James Ratcliff's recent assertion that the public junior college should be considered "more as an idea than as a reality" even as late as 1919.[1] Relying on Eells's 1931 junior college directory, Ratcliff defends his assertion by pointing out that just six public junior colleges were established by 1920 -- hardly, in his judgement, suggestive of a vital, dynamic movement.

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[1] James Ratcliff, "'First' Public Junior Colleges in an Age of Reform," Journal of Higher Education 58, no. 2 (March/April 1987): 152.

[2] Writing in 1939, Doak S. Cambpell agrees with Ratcliff that the first two decades of this century were a period of "slow, tedious, and often painful progress" for the junior college. But he then puts the number of public junior colleges operating in 1920 at 54, although he cites no source for this inexplicably high number. See Doak S. Campbell, "Retrospect and Prospect," Junior College Journal 9 (1939): 440.

That Ratcliff's assertion is erroneous becomes evident when one looks beyond Eells's list to other sources, including the annual reports of California's Wood, the survey of Minnesota junior colleges prepared by Keller, Lokken, and Meyer,[11] F.M. McDowell's 1919 list of junior colleges, and various local records. What these sources demonstrate is that Ratcliff's six junior colleges were joined by 23 others, all of which were established before 1917, but then were either closed, reorganized as senior colleges, or converted into private junior colleges sometime before Eells compiled his list in 1931.

Typical of the 23 junior colleges omitted by Ratcliff was the "six-year high school" organized by the Goshen, Indiana, school board in 1904. At its founding, Goshen's junior college was arguably the nation's most successful such venture.[12] Goshen's aggressive school superintendent, Victor Hedgepeth, had pursued — and won — recognition of the collegiate standing of his new school

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[11] Robert J. Keller, Harry M. Lokken, and Roy F. Meyer, The Junior College in Minnesota, (St. Paul: State of Minnesota, Department of Education, 1958).

[12] The story surrounding the organization of Goshen's public junior college — known locally as the "six year high school" — has been well told by Robert Smolich and the discussion of events at Goshen is greatly indebted to his work. See Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 129-167.

by the University of Chicago's Corresponding Committee, despite President Harper's initial reservations. Initial student support for the Goshen venture appears to have been strong, with enrollments growing steadily through 1907, and any public criticism was likely muted by Hedgepeth's insistence tht his high school's junior college students defray their instructional costs through a substantial tuition charge.[14] However, Goshen's junior college faltered within five years of its opening. A decline in the school's fortunes was first signaled by an enrollment decline beginning in 1908, which was then followed by Hedgepeth's apparently acrimonious resignation in favor of a more lucrative career in insurance sales.

More than likely, as Smolich has argued, the relocation of a Mennonite college from Elkhart to a ten-acre campus on Goshen's southern outskirts followed by its adoption of the city's name - Goshen College -- best explains the steady erosion of student and public interest in a public junior college.[15] After all, many of Goshen's residents were Mennonite, the new college's tuition was

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[14] Victor W. B. Hegepeth, "The Six-Yar High School Plan At Goshen, Ind.," School Review 13, no. 1 (1905): 19-23.

[15] Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 164.

approximately the same as Hedgepeth's junior college, and the Mennonite college offered the baccalaureate degree. Under these conditions, students had little incentive to attend the public junior college, and local taxpayers had no incentive to underwrite an academic program readily available through a proximate private institution. As with most failed junior colleges, there is no formal record of the school's closing, although local school minutes make no mention of the junior college after 1911. The reluctance of the Goshen school board to announce the closing of its experiment in higher education can likely be attributed to the natural hesitancy of elected officials to advertise their failures.

Even as junior college directories became more frequent toward the end of our period, undercounting remained a serious problem because their propagandistic purpose did not change. If, for example, one were to generalize as to either the number or geographic distribution of junior colleges solely on the basis of Eell's 1941 directory -- certainly the most comprehensive prepared to that point -- one might reasonably infer that no Louisiana school district had ever sponsored a junior college. In fact, four operated in the state, all of which failed, a point of information that actually would not

have furthered Eells's purposes. The largest of the four was Ouachita Junior College, opened in 1928 under the auspices of the Ouachita school board in the parish seat of Monroe, with the other three established in the towns of Haynesville, Hammond, and Homer.[1] Although Louisiana's junior colleges met with some initial success, the region's economic deterioration after 1931 left all four of their sponsoring school boards little choice but to suspend the institutions sometime between 1932 and 1933.

No less serious misconceptions can result when contemporary junior college listings are read sequentially without any reference to local sources. The history of the junior college in Los Angeles provides a good example of how an uncritical reading of contemporary lists is not only certain to confuse the reader but to conceal an

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[1] John M. Foote, "The Junior College Movement in Louisiana," Journal of the Louisiana Teachers Association 5, no. 4 (1928): 30-33.

[1] Unlike the junior colleges at Haynesville, Hammond, and Homer, Ouachita Junior College was saved from outright closure. In 1933, the parish school board entered into an agreement with Louisiana State University that transferred the junior college's building, grounds and faculty to university control, laying the foundation for Louisiana State University's Northeast Center. This agreement was immediately challenged in court, although the source of this challenge is not clear. In 1934, however, the center's proponents turned to the legislature, which authorized the agreement. See "Change in Louisiana," Junior College Journal 5, no. 1 (1934): 36.

important lesson in the vagaries of community support of a junior college in the face of changing local conditions. According to McDowell's 1919 listing of junior colleges, it would seem that the Los Angeles school district operated two junior colleges, both dating from 1912. Neither, however, was included by Koos in his 1924 list, and he offered no explanation for their apparent exclusion. To complicate matters further, in 1931 Eells reported that a single public junior college was operating in Los Angeles as an independent district governed by its own board.

In attempting to make some sense of these lists, one might possibly surmise that McDowell over-stated the number of Los Angeles's junior colleges by one, while Koos simply overlooked this junior college, with Eells finally getting matters right. In fact, the history of the early public junior college in Los Angeles was far more complex than suggested by this line of explanation and points up just how vulnerable early junior colleges were to shifting civic aspirations, state interests, and local taxpayer concerns.

At the outset, it should be noted that all three lists were accurate. From a variety of sources, we know that the Los Angeles school district was among

California's first to append a junior college department to a high school. Not at all surprisingly, given the city's size, the Los Angeles school board organized two junior college departments in 1912, one at Los Angeles City High School and the other at Hollywood High. By 1915, according to Gray, these two junior colleges had a combined enrollment of 257 students, accounting for approximately half of all the public junior college students in California.[1] Given the size of the city's two junior colleges, it would seem unlikely that Koos could have simply omitted them from his 1924 listing. In fact Koos did not overlook them; they had been closed by the Los Angeles school board in 1922 in direct response to the opening of the University of California's Los Angeles branch campus. The city's two junior colleges had simply been rendered redundant.[2] Koos's list, of course, made no reference to this development, since the decision by

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[1] Gray, "The Junior College," 120.

[2] In closing its two junior colleges, the Los Angeles school board was fulfilling its responsibility to local taxpayers. The cost of the two junior college was born by local taxpayers, while the California legislature funded the university's new branch campuses. It would have been politically irresponsible for the Los Angeles public school board to expend local tax dollars for programs which paralleled a state-funded program operated within its district boundaries.

the Los Angeles school board clearly implied that a major American city would willingly give up its junior college when a more prestigious option became available.

This said, how does one then explain Eells's reference to a Los Angeles Junior College in his 1931 listing of junior colleges? What local records show is that in 1929 Los Angeles voters had approved the creation of a junior college district under the terms of the state's 1921 Junior College Act. In part established to garner the enhanced level of state aid which accrued to junior colleges organized under this act, and in part as a cost-savings measure, it was this second "Los Angeles Junior College" that Eells's included in his list.[1] What is noteworthy from an historical perspective is that the difference in purpose and curriculum between this junior college and its two predecessors could not have been more striking. Los Angeles's original junior colleges were no

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[1] As will be described more fully in Chapter V, a peculiarity of California's 1921 Junior College Act required that a school district which did not operate a junior college reimburse a junior college attended by one of its residents. In the sprawling city of Los Angeles, a substantial number of young people were attending junior colleges at Santa Monica, Long Beach, and Glendale at great cost to the Los Angeles school district. By establishing its own junior college, the Los Angeles district could compel these students to enroll in their city's junior college and thereby avoid the cost of reimbursements to other school districts.

less rigorous academically in their admissions requirements and course offerings than the University of California. But Los Angeles's third junior college had no intention of competing with the university's Los Angeles branch for students. Instead, the re-born Los Angeles Junior College, under the leadership of William Snyder, embraced an alternative curriculum that emphasized training in the vocations and "semi-professions," not so much out of any deeply-held ideological belief in the value of vocational education, but from the realization that to have offered an academic program that only paralleled the university's would have constituted a waste of taxpayer dollars.

Yet another limitation of contemporary junior college listings is that the schooling institutions of the early twentieth century often proved difficult to classify, since they did not always fit neatly into narrow

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Snyder, following his retirement from Los Angeles Junior College, spelled out his view of the relationship between the university and the junior college in a fascinatingly self-serving letter to Walter Crosby Eells. Not only did Snyder argue that the junior college had no need to replicate work available at a university (to be, in his words, its "basement"), but that it was this belief which guided his work in the development of Los Angeles Junior College. Additionally, Snyder took credit for introducing the term "semi-professions" into the junior college lexicon. "November Editorial-A Comment," Junior College Journal 9, no. 4 (1939): 200.

categories of control and governance. The seemingly simple classification of a junior college as either a public or a private institution frequently presented the early list makers with difficult choices. One especially troublesome institution for both Koos and Eells was Indiana's Vincennes University. A university in name only (Vincennes offered just the first two years of a conventional baccalaureate program), Koos classified the institution as a private junior college in his 1924 listing. This seems to have been a reasonable decision, given that the Vincennes governing board was self-perpetuating and held its charter from the state legislature, and that the school was funded entirely through tuition, endowment income, and private donations. Yet as Frye has noted, Ells's 1941 directory classified Vincennes as a public junior college.[1] While Eells does not indicate his rationale, it is likely he regarded Vincennes as public because the Indiana legislature had granted the school extraordinary taxing authority to provide a junior college program for Knox County, much in the manner of a public junior college.

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[1] Frye, The Vision of the Public Junior College, 75.

Given the methodological and factual limitations of early junior college lists and directories, it would be unreasonable to rely upon them as the sole basis for a comprehensive inventory of early junior colleges. As an alternative, this chapter will lay a sound foundation for such an inventory in three steps. As its first step, this chapter will go beyond the more familiar national listings of junior colleges to incorporate a wide range of local and regional sources in order to identify otherwise overlooked junior colleges. Many of the national listings that will be consulted will be familiar to junior college historians, having been chosen because of their wide use and acceptance. However, these lists and directories will not be accepted at face value, but will be set against local and regional sources, including unpublished state reports, theses and dissertations, local school records, and newspaper accounts. These previously untapped sources will highlight a number of pubic junior colleges that, for the reasons already described, never found their way into a listing prepared by Koos, Cambpell or Eells.

This chapter's second section will build on the first by utilizing a criterion-based methodology for evaluating institutions identified through national, regional, and local sources for possible inclusion in a

comprehensive inventory of junior colleges. In its basic approach, this section will follow the methodology employed by Donald Tewkesbury in preparing his inventory of antebellum American colleges.[23] While separated by nearly a century, the inventorying of public junior colleges faces many of the same problems faced by Tewkesbury. As with antebellum colleges, institutional self-declarations of junior colleges, particularly with regard to the date of establishment, must be regarded as inherently suspect. As was also the case with antebellum colleges, institutional terminology was slow to standardize for America's two-year colleges. As late as 1920 some self-proclaimed junior colleges were nothing more than aspiring high schools, while many "six-month high schools" and "upward extension programs" were collegiate in every sense of the word. But most importantly, outside of California, no state agency took responsibility for regularly gathering and verifying information on junior colleges. In the absence of such sources of standardized information, only through the application of specific, objective criteria can public

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[23] Donald G. Tewksbury, The Foundation of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War (New York: Archon Books, 1965), 28-30.

junior colleges be accurately identified and included in a comprehensive inventory.

The chapter's third section will utilize Census data to classify the nearly 275 communities that sponsored a junior college into a limited number of meaningful categories. This classification is necessary to ensure that any generalizations with respect to the junior college's origins and early development are not based on just two or three exempla, unrepresentative of the universe of junior colleges. To base a history of the early public junior college entirely on the conditions that gave rise to the large and successful junior colleges of Kansas City, Joliet, and Detroit is to presume unreasonably a degree of uniformity of circumstance and interests across a remarkably diverse range of communities.

Indeed, as we will find, junior colleges were established in cities and towns of virtually every size and condition, from the great and prosperous cities of Chicago and Los Angeles to such small and struggling towns as Holton, Kansas, and Cresco, Iowa. Any explanation of the junior college that would ignore such obvious differences in the objective conditions under which these junior colleges developed would result in generalizations

hopelessly ambiguous and uselessly broad. To avoid this pitfall, and consistent with the practice of the early twentieth century, this chapter will classify sponsoring communities using census data into three general types: small towns (communities with a population of less than 12,500), municipalities or small cities (communities with a population of between 12,500 and 250,000), and great cities. This classification scheme will provide a reasonable basis for categorizing the nearly 300 junior colleges and their sponsoring communities into meaningful and manageable groupings.

Sources

As was discussed in the first chapter, the student of the early junior college faces considerable difficulty in locating reliable primary sources to document the origins of many of these institutions. In contrast to Tewksbury, who frequently turned to state legislative records to establish a college's chartering date, even as late as 1925 the majority of public junior colleges were established without the sanction of any state authority and even, at times, without a state government's knowledge. This circumstance arose because, in contrast to traditional colleges, most early junior colleges did not have a separate corporate existence. The typical junior

college of this era functioned both legally and operationally as a department of a comprehensive high school that, in turn, was an administrative division of a unified school district. The only record of a junior college's establishment (or subsequent closure) is often to be found in school board minutes that, as we saw in the case with Red Oak Junior College, can be less than complete. It is only by collating the national directories with the widest possible range of local and regional sources that we can hope to compile a truly comprehensive inventory of public junior colleges.[4]

1. Junior College Directories

Notwithstanding their various shortcomings, certain contemporary junior college listings can serve a useful, if limited, role as sources in the identification of junior colleges for inclusion in a comprehensive inventory. Four listings are particularly useful in this regard. In chronological order, these four are: F.M.

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[4] The value of local sources, particularly local newspaper accounts of a junior college's founding, goes well beyond assisting in the task of list making. As will become clear in subsequent chapters, such sources cast an invaluable light on the public debate that surrounded virtually every local decision to sponsor a junior college. The record of such debate not only documents the arguments of junior college proponents but often reveals the basis for any opposition and the tactics adopted by both sides in the attempt to see their interests prevail.

McDowell's listing of 1919, Leonard Koos's listing of 1922, Doak Campbell's directory of 1931 and Walter Crosby Eells's directory of 1941.

F. M. McDowell's listing, which appeared as an appendix to his 1919 publication, The Junior College, was the first systematic attempt to inventory America's junior colleges, public as well as private. This listing was initially prepared by McDowell as an appendix to his Iowa State dissertation, but it came into general circulation when it was published by the Bureau of Education in 1919 as part of the Bureau's Bulletin series.

McDowell's list is especially noteworthy in that it established the basic format for all subsequent junior college listings. For each junior college, McDowell reported its year of organization, the state and city in which it was located, its control, any gender or race restrictions on student admission, and its accreditation status. Subsequent lists did expand on these categories (adding, for example, information on student enrollment and the number of faculty), but none would depart from McDowell's basic framework.

F.M. McDowell, The Junior College, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, no. 35 (Washington, DC: 1919).

The second major directory of junior colleges was published in 1924 as an appendix to Leonard Koos's The Junior College. Apart from its detailed reporting of student enrollment data, the Koos listing differed from McDowell's only in that it segregated junior colleges into separate lists on the basis of control. Interestingly, this differentiation produced three separate listings: private junior colleges, locally-controlled junior colleges, and a relatively short list of those junior colleges operated as part of a state institution.[1]

The third notable directory of junior colleges was prepared by Doak Campbell in 1931. At the time, Campbell was both secretary of the American Association of Junior Colleges and a professor of education at the George Peabody College. In contrast to the earlier efforts by McDowell and Koos, Campbell's directory was not an appendix to a general study of the junior college but was

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[1]Although only a small percentage of all junior colleges were included in Koos's third list, within California they made up an important subset of junior colleges. Under a provision of California's 1921 Junior College Act, communities were encouraged to delegate control of their junior college to a near-by state college, and this was done in such cities as San Diego, San Jose, and Fresno. While the junior college in each of these communities maintained a continuous legal existence, it was, for all practical purposes, absorbed into its proximate state college.

included in the first volume of the American Association of Junior College's Junior College Journal. From this point, a directory of junior colleges would become an annual feature of the Junior College Journal, and it was within this tradition that Eells would publish his directory in 1941.

The last of the four national listings which will be used as a source is Walter Crosby Eells's 1941 directory. This directory has been selected because it includes every junior colleges in operation as of the 1939-40 academic year, the concluding year covered by this dissertation. It is also included because it reveals the growing trend, most noticeable in California and Chicago, toward the operation of multiple junior colleges by large school districts - precursors of the modern-day community college systems found in such cities as Phoenix, Dallas, and Miami.

2. Primary Sources

Building on the results of the compilation of the junior colleges cited by McDowell, Koos, Campbell, and Eells, three bodies of local sources will be examined to assist in verifying the information contained in the national listings and to identify junior colleges overlooked by these listings. One body of sources will be

institutional records, including school board minutes, the annual reports of superintendents, and institutional histories. A second source will be the junior college surveys that were infrequently prepared by state departments of education or university extension services. Often only undertaken in response to specific legislative directive, these state surveys have a special value in that they typically went well beyond the skeletal information found in the national listings to include detailed discussions of faculty credentials, student demographics, and even brief institutional histories. The third body consists of master's theses and doctoral

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The institutional records of the junior colleges of Joliet, Detroit, Newark, Kansas City (MO), and Chicago are especially important in clarifying the founding dates of these institutions, since all were organized prior to McDowell's directory. As we have already seen in the case of Joliet Junior College, institutional records strongly argue for a founding date of 1916, not, as is now claimed by the institution, 1901.

State reports on the status of junior colleges in Texas, Iowa, Minnesota and Nebraska are of particular importance because, as was discussed above (7 n.), the junior colleges in these states operated extra-legally for a number of years before the adoption of state enabling legislation. These reports often represent the only source which can substitute for institutional records that, in the case of those junior colleges which closed (such as Minnesota's Cloquet and Pipestone and California's Le Grand), are no longer available.

dissertations.[1] Many of these works are limited to the study of just one or two junior colleges and were often prepared by institutional staff members with extensive access to school and community records. Others, such as Gray's and Brooks's, have a state-wide or even a national scope, and, particularly in the case of Brook's thesis, fill a major void in our understanding of the early junior college before national directories appeared on a regular basis. Still others, notably Cotton's thesis on the Oklahoma junior college, serve as a substitute for state reports at a time when state oversight of the junior college was nominal.

Criterion-Based Selection of Junior Colleges

In order to avoid the classification problems posed by such institutions as Vincennes University, the inclusion of junior colleges identified through a review of the sources described above will be based on the

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[1] The theses by Gray and Brooks and Smolich's dissertation, all cited in Chapter I, are invaluable sources of information on the earliest junior colleges. The often confusing status of junior colleges in Oklahoma in the 1920s is clarified by Cotton's thesis, as we have already discussed. As we will find in Chapter V, our knowledge of the failure of junior colleges to be organized in Wyoming, despite repeated local attempts to secure enabling legislation, depends to a great degree on a dissertation.

application of four criteria, much in the manner that Tewksbury selected antebellum colleges for inclusion in his listing.[30] These four criteria have been developed based upon a review of the institutional standards developed by state universities and regional associations as the basis for accrediting two-year colleges after 1900.[31] A second consideration in the development of these criteria is the need to provide a reasonable and consistent basis for separating out public junior colleges from the more numerous, but institutionally less developed postgraduate programs, normal institutes, and adult schools which were also being organized by public high schools during the first part of this century.[32]

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[30] Donald G. Tewksbury, The Foundation of American Colleges and Universities before the Civil War (New York: Archon Books, 1965), 28-30.

[31] Possibly the standard work on the criteria for accrediting junior colleges prior to 1920 was Jesse H. Coursault, "Circular of Information to Accredited Junior Colleges," University of Missouri Bulletin 19, no. 4 (1918). The North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools adopted its first standards for accrediting junior colleges in 1917. See Kendric C. Babcock, "Report of the Commission on Higher Education," Proceedings of the Twenty-Second Annual Meeting of the North Central Association 22 (1917): 24, 26-27, 34. The association issued its first list of accredited junior colleges, totaling 18, the next year.

[32] The need for care in this process of differentiation stems in part from the fact that it was not at all uncommon for a school system to operate a broad

Based on these considerations, the four criteria that an institution must satisfy for inclusion in the inventory of junior colleges (Table 1) are:

1. The institution offers instruction of collegiate grade encompassing the full range of disciplines associated with at least the first year of a traditional college course. At a minimum, this would consist of instruction in four academic disciplines.

This criterion provides the historian with a basis for differentiating between the great many public high schools that offered the occasional postgraduate course and those high schools that developed these offerings into a coherent and reasonably comprehensive program of college-level study. Based on this criterion, Gary's East Chicago High School, which Elizabeth Brooks reported as offering some postgraduate courses about 1910 "in a very limited number of subjects" with the approval of the University of Indiana would be excluded for lack of curricular

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range of departments -- from normal schools, citizenship schools, and adult schools to even medical colleges -- that at the time bore some resemblance to a junior college, particularly if viewed from the perspective of the modern-day comprehensive community college. One must be careful to avoid the anachronism of seeing in an early twentieth century adult school (which typically limited itself to an elementary or secondary curriculum) a nascent junior college solely on the grounds that many high schools surrendered responsibility for the basic education of adults to community colleges after 1965.

breadth.[3] At the same time, this criterion would allow for the inclusion of those high schools -- led by Goshen (1904), Kansas City (1915), Detroit (1915), and Joliet (1916) -- that after 1900 expanded and integrated their postgraduate offerings into a free-standing program fully equivalent to the traditional freshman college course.

Importantly, in limiting the requirement of programmatic scope to the freshman year, this criterion permits the inclusion of many junior colleges, concentrated primarily in the small towns of Oklahoma, Missouri, and Iowa, that simply lacked the student demand and local resources to offer instruction at the sophomore-year level.[4] An argument that such one-year programs should be excluded from this inventory fails to take into consideration the fact that, in many instances, the needs of students were adequately served by a single-year program. Well into the 1920s, a single year of college study met the admissions prerequisites of most law and

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[3] Brooks, "The Junior College," 44.

[4] As we learn from Cotton's survey of Oklahoma's early junior colleges, only two of that state's 14 junior colleges -- Muskogee and Mangum -- ever offered a full two-year course, and it was eight years before Muskogee could add a sophomore year, while Mangum's junior college was discontinued the year after it added a sophomore class. See Cotton, "The Local Public Junior College in Oklahoma," 68.

medical schools or satisfied the credentialing requirements for a grammar school teaching certificate in most states.[31] In many instances, the school districts may have limited their colleges to a single-year program, simply because there was insufficient demand from students for a second year of college work.

2. The institution restricted enrollment in its collegiate program to high school graduates.

The key policy decision that faced a school board of this period when it considered establishing a junior college was not whether it should add collegiate-grade courses to its high school curriculum. By 1900 such courses were relatively common in the nation's larger high schools, as will be described in Chapter III. The difficult and costly decision was whether to offer these courses separately from high school courses and exclusively for high school graduates. By segregating collegiate and high school students, a school board not only increased the cost of its postgraduate offerings, it

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[31] In the case of medical schools, as of 1915 approximately half of the nation's 95 medical colleges required only a year or less of college work. Law schools were less strict. For a discussion of entrance requirements for medical colleges, see Kenneth M. Ludmere, Learning to Heal, (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1983), 113-122.

effectively encouraged its postgraduate students to develop a separate and distinct culture modeled on the culture of the university undergraduate college – to create a junior college regardless of the institution's formal designation. For a high school to take this course carried risk. A junior college's student culture could easily overshadow the high school's (especially if the junior college fielded a football or basketball team), and there was always the potential of friction between the high school and junior college student groups that, after all, still occupied the same building. Not all school districts were willing to take on this cost and its attendant risks, and others (as was the case in Indiana) were specifically prohibited from doing so by state law, and so maintained joint-enrollment postgraduate programs. These programs, which enrolled more than 70,000 students as late as 1930, have been excluded from this inventory.

3. There is evidence of some formal accreditation of the junior college by a university, state department of education, or regional association, and the acceptance of its courses for transfer by standard colleges and universities.

What are known today as "articulation agreements" were critical to the early junior college, as will demonstrated by Chapter V's description of the early

difficulties faced by Kansas's Fort Scott Junior College. Virtually the first and overriding concern of a school district that established a junior college was to guarantee the acceptance of its course offerings by other colleges and universities, as demonstrated by Victor Hedgepeth's aggressive pursuit of recognition for his "six-year high school" by the University of Chicago. This concern reflected, in part, the difficulties that some school systems had experienced in gaining acceptance of their postgraduate courses from universities at the end of the nineteenth century -- a problem even Joliet experienced at the hands of its University of Michigan accreditors." But certainly no less important were the factors of civic pride, parental interests, and junior college advocacy by local boosters. To be "recognized" by a state university was not only a signal that a community had the wherewithal to create a truly collegiate institution, but it lessened parental fears that the

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" Smolich reports that the Michigan accrediting team that visited Joliet was not only slow in reporting its findings to the high school (Professor J. H. Drake of Michigan actually wrote Brown and apologized for having failed to write "for some time") but used the letter to criticize the school's postgraduate offerings in Latin for failing to teach the "reading of Latin as Latin." Quoted in Smolich,"Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 71.

postgraduate work of their children would go unrewarded upon transfer. But most importantly, recognition represented an important foil to be used by boosters against local critics, who often questioned the "collegiate" quality of their new college and its program of studies, as we will find was the case with Fort Scott Junior College.

4. The junior college operated under the governance and control of a locally-elected school board.

Administratively, the legal organization of junior college's varied not only from state to state, but within states. Until 1921, when the California legislature adopted legislation that permitted the organization of independent junior colleges, virtually all public junior colleges operated on what was known, at the time, as the "departmental plan." Under this governance structure, a junior college functioned with more-or-less autonomy under the administrative direction of its sponsoring high school's principal. This plan was established early in Kansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Michigan, Missouri, and Oklahoma, and survived until the 1950s without significant change in these states. Following California's lead, an alternative to the departmental plan -- the district plan -- developed

in a small number of other states, notably Texas and Nebraska. Outside of Mississippi, where governance of its junior colleges was shaped by unique conditions, junior colleges organized on the district plan operated as independent institutions under elected boards within a set taxing district that could include multiple high school districts.

The one feature common to junior colleges operating under either plan was that they were governed by a

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[7] Mississippi's junior colleges were organized initially under the terms of a 1922 state law that permitted the state's county-wide agricultural high schools to extend their curriculum to include work of a junior college-grade. But in 1928, with the adoption of Senate Bill 131, what were then the state's 11 junior colleges were placed under the formal control of a state Commission of Junior Colleges, the nation's first state-wide governing body solely responsible for junior colleges. Yet, while James Young and James Ewing use the creation of the commission as the basis for their claim that Mississippi had thereby created the nation's first state-system of junior colleges, the commission's oversight was quite nominal and indirect. Even after 1928, the day-to-day governance of each of Mississippi's junior colleges remained the responsibility of its sponsoring agricultural high school's board of trustees, just as the majority of its funding derived from local sources. As we will describe below, the impetus behind Mississippi's unique system of junior college governance and funding derived in great measure from the desire of the agricultural high schools to develop a new rationale for their continued existence in the face of enrollment losses due to the advent of community high schools in Mississippi's smaller cities and towns after 1920. See James B. Young and James M. Ewing, The Mississippi Public Junior College Story, (Jackson, MS: Mississippi Junior College Association, 1978), 3-4.

locally-elected board, typically consisting of five or seven members, which delegated its authority to manage the junior college, to direct the curriculum, and to regulate student life to a single school official. Under the departmental plan, this official was typically the high school principal, except in the larger junior colleges, where the principal would be assisted by a dean. Under the district plan, this officer was generally designated as either president or superintendent/president of the district.

One factor that this criterion purposefully does not take into consideration is the source of a junior college's operating funds. With the exception of California, public junior colleges were never part of the "free, public school" and, as such, relied upon a mix of public and private funding to meet their operating expenses. In some states, as was described in the previous chapter, tuition and private support constituted virtually all of a junior college's funding. At best, local tax support came in the form of the free use of a sponsoring high school's facilities. In New Jersey, Maryland, and Missouri, a number of junior colleges created during the Depression depended upon the Federal Emergency Relief Administration for their operating funds. And in one

extraordinary instance, a public junior college -- Pennsylvania's Hershey Junior College -- was entirely supported by the Hershey family trust, with the exception of a $15 fee required of each student to cover book expenses.

Two types of junior college are excluded by this criterion. The first are those junior colleges that operated as integral components of a state or municipal university (e.g., the General College at the University of Minnesota and the University of Toledo's Junior College.) The second are those junior colleges organized under the auspices of a non-profit foundation. One such junior college was organized by the Chamber of Commerce of Lamar, Colorado, in 1936. Others were the four independent, non-profit junior colleges created in Washington State to supercede the state's public junior colleges when the state's attorney general ruled these public institutions unconstitutional in 1928. All four of Washington's private junior colleges (as Eells listed them in 1941) were not reorganized as public junior colleges until the passage of enabling legislation in late 1941.

"Junior College for Hershey," Junior College Journal 9, no. 1 (October, 1938): 42.

Classification of Sponsoring Communities

Even a cursory review of early public junior colleges reveals that they were not all established in such growing, prosperous communities as Joliet, Illinois, and Pasadena, California. Several were established in some of the nation's largest cities, including Chicago, Detroit, and Newark. Many were located in small, isolated towns, from the Mississippi delta to Bismark, North Dakota. At a minimum, it would seem reasonable that any history of the public junior college would explore what role, if any, conditions of local wealth, population growth, and isolation had on a community's decision to organize and support a junior college. Categorizing early junior colleges on the basis of these conditions, following the scheme described below, would create more manageable groupings of a relatively large universe of public junior college and make such an inquiry feasible.

Indeed, by approaching junior colleges not as a single, uniform type created by a few educators and informed by cosmopolitan values, but as parochial institutions shaped by local conditions and interests, it becomes possible to ask an entirely new range of questions of these institutions. Is it, from this perspective, at

all reasonable to assume that Detroit's junior college was established to serve the same ends, and in response to the same community interests, as was the junior college in Harper, Kansas? Whereas the junior college literature has assumed that junior colleges were of a single type, inspired by a common spirit, serving essentially the same students, and working to similar ends, does it not seem more reasonable that junior colleges were influenced by the specific conditions that prevailed in their respective sponsoring communities? As these communities varied in their size, economic circumstance, and aspirations for the future, would not the purposes of their junior colleges also vary?

Where population data is available from the decennial census of 1930, and excluding the few junior colleges organized later in this period under the district plan to serve entire counties and other large geographic areas, the sponsoring communities of the junior colleges listed in the following inventory (Table 3) have been classified according to the following types:

Type 1: Small Town -- those communities with a population of less than 12,500 by 1930.[*]

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[*] It should be noted that in 1924 Koos recommended that any city considering sponsoring a public junior

Type 2: Municipality or Small City -- those communities with a population of at least 12,500 by 1930.

Type 3: Great City -- those communities with a population of more than 250,000 by 1930.

It setting the cut off point between small towns and municipalities at 12,500, the primary consideration was the potential of a community to operate a public junior college with a minimum enrollment of at least 75. This number of students would meet the enrollment standard of most regional accrediting associations, provide for a reasonably broad curriculum, and enable the junior college to achieve economies of scale that would not result in unreasonable per-student costs. Based on national averages for 1930, a city of 12,500 could expect to its junior college to achieve this level of enrollment total with a high school enrollment of approximately 600, producing 100 graduates a year. The district's junior college could expect to enroll half of the high school's graduates as

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college have a minimum population of between 35,000 and 40,000. But Koos's figures were based on 1918 student enrollment patterns, nor did he take into account the positive effect of tuition income and private subventions as offsets to local tax revenue. See Koos, The Junior College, 582-583.

freshmen, and retain half of its freshman class as sophomores, resulting in a total enrollment of 75.

Comprehensive Inventory

Table 3
Inventory of Public Junior Colleges
1900 - 1940

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
Arkansas				
1 Dunbar	Little Rock	1929		Municipal
2 El Dorado	El Dorado	1925		Municipal
3 Fort Smith	Fort Smith	1928		Municipal
4 Little Rock	Little Rock	1927		Municipal
Arizona				
5 Gila	Thatcher	1933		Small Town
6 Phoenix	Phoenix	1920		Municipal
California				
7 Antelope Valley	Lancaster	1929		Small Town
8 Bakersfield	Bakersfield	1913		Municipal
9 Brawely	Brawely	1924		Small Town
10 Chaffey	Ontario	1916		Municipal
11 Citrus Union	Azuza	1915		Small Town
12 Coalinga	Coalinga	1933		Small Town
13 Compton	Compton	1927		Municipal
14 El Centro	El Centro	1922		Small Town
15 Eastside	El Centro	1930		Small Town
16 Eureka	Eureka	1915	****	Municipal
17 Fresno	Fresno	1910		Municipal
18 Fresno Tech	Fresno	1930		Municipal
19 Fullerton	Fullerton	1913		Small Town
20 Hollywood	Los Angeles	1912	1922	Great City
21 Glendale	Glendale	1927		Municipal
22 Lassen	Susanville	1925		Small Town
23 Le Grand	Le Grand	1913	****	Small Town
24 Long Beach (1)	Long Beach	1912	****	Municipal
25 Long Beach (2)	Long Beach	1927		Municipal
26 Los Angeles (1)	Los Angeles	1912	1922	Great City
27 Los Angeles (2)	Los Angeles	1929		Great City
28 Marin Union	Kentfield	1926		Small Town
29 Modesto	Modesto	1921		Municipal
30 Modesto Evening	Modesto	1939		Municipal
31 Oceanside-Carlsbad	****	1934		Small Town
32 Oceanside-Carlsbad	****	1939		Small Town
33 Palo Alto Union	Palo Alto	****	****	Municipal

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
34 Pasadena (1)	Pasadena	1912	****	Municipal
35 Pasadena (2)	Pasadena	1924		Municipal
36 Placer (1)	Auburn	1914	****	Small Town
37 Placer (2)	Auburn	1936		Small Town
38 Pomona	Pomona	1916		Municipal
39 Porterville	Porterville	1927		Small Town
40 Reedley	Reedley	1926		Small Town
41 Riverside	Riverside	1916		Municipal
42 Sacramento	Sacramento	1916		Municipal
43 Salinas	Salinas	1920		Small Town
44 Salinas Evening	Salinas	1935		Small Town
45 San Benito	Hollister	1919		Small Town
46 San Bernardino Valley	San Bernardino	1926		Municipal
47 San Diego (1)	San Diego	1914	****	Municipal
48 San Diego (2)	San Diego	1935		Municipal
49 San Diego Evening	San Diego	1939		Municipal
50 San Diego Voc	San Diego	1939		Municipal
51 San Diego Eve Voc	San Diego	1939		Municipal
52 San Francisco	San Francisco	1935		Great City
53 San Jose	San Jose	1921		Municipal
54 San Luis Obispo	San Luis Obispo	1936		Small Town
55 San Mateo	San Mateo	1922		Municipal
56 Santa Ana	Santa Ana	1915		Municipal
57 Santa Barbara	Santa Barbara	1911	****	Municipal
58 Santa Maria	Santa Maria	1920		Small Town
59 Santa Monica (1)	Santa Monica	1912	1915	Municipal
60 Santa Monica (2)	Santa Monica	1929		Municipal
61 Santa Rosa Union	Santa Rosa	1917		Small Town
62 Stockton	Stockton	1935		Municipal
63 Stockton Evening	Stockton	1939		Municipal
64 Taft	Taft	1922		Small Town
65 Ventura	Ventura	1925		Small Town
66 Visalia	Visalia	1926		Small Town
67 Yreka	Yreka	1916	1917	Small Town
68 Yuba	Marysville	1927		Small Town
Colorado				
69 Fort Lewis	Hesperus	1910		Small Town
70 Mesa	Grand Junction	1925		Small Town

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
71 Pueblo	Pueblo	1937		Municipal
72 Trinidad State	Trinidad	1925		Municipal
Florida				
73 St. Petersburg	St. Petersburg	1927	****	Municipal
74 Palm Beach	West Palm Beach	1933		Municipal
Georgia				
75 Burke	Waynesboro City	1928	****	Small Town
76 Armstrong	Savanah	1935		Municipal
77 Augusta	Augusta	1925		Municipal
Iowa				
78 Albia	Albia	1927		Small Town
79 Bloomfield	Bloomfield	1925		Small Town
80 Boone	Boone	1927		Small Town
81 Britt	Britt	1927		Small Town
82 Burlington	Burlington	1920		Municipal
83 Centerville	Centerville	1931		Small Town
84 Clarinda	Clarinda	1923		Small Town
85 Chariton	Chariton	1927		Small Town
86 Creston	Creston	1926		Small Town
87 Cresco	Cresco	****	1929	Small Town
88 Eagle Grove	Eagle Grove	1928		Small Town
89 Elkader	Elkader	1929		Small Town
90 Earlham	Earlham	1928	****	Small Town
91 Ellsworth	Ellsworth	1929		Small Town
92 Emmetsburgh	Emmetsburgh	1930		Small Town
93 Estherville	Estherville	1924		Small Town
94 Fort Dodge	Fort Dodge	1922		Municipal
95 Independence	Independence	1928		Small Town
96 Maquoketa	Maquoketa	1927		Small Town
97 Marshalltown	Marshalltown	1927		Municipal
98 Mason City	Mason City	1918		Municipal
99 Muscatine	Muscatine	1929		Municipal
100 Osceols	Oseols	1927		Small Town
101 Red Oak	Red Oak	1922		Small Town
102 Sheldon	Sheldon	1926		Small Town
103 Tipton	Tipton	1927		Small Town
104 Washington	Washington	1927		Small Town
105 Waukon	Waukon	1923		Small Town
106 Webster City	Webster City	1926		Small Town
Idaho				
107 Boise	Boise	1932		Municipal
108 North Idaho	Coeur d'Alene	1933		Small Town

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
Illinois				
109 Austin Evening	Chicago	1939		Great City
110 Crane	Chicago	1916	1933	Great City
112 Englewood Evening	Chicago	****		Great City
113 Joliet	Joliet	1913		Municipal
114 LaSalle-Peru-Oglo	LaSalle	1924		Municipal
115 Lyons	LaGrange	1924		Municipal
116 Maine	Park Ridge	1939	1942	Municipal
117 Medill	Chicago	1919	1925	Great City
118 Herzl	Chicago	1934		Great City
119 Morton	Cicero	1924		Municipal
120 Proviso	Maywood	1935	1936	Municipal
121 Shurs	Chicago	1938		Great City
122 Thorton	Harvey	1927		Municipal
123 Wilson	Chicago	1934		Great City
124 Wright	Chicago	1934		Great City
Indiana				
125 Goshen	Goshen	1904	1911	Small Town
Kansas				
126 Arkansas City	Arkansas City	1922		Municipal
127 Chanute	Chanute	1936		Small Town
128 Coffeyville	Coffeyville	1923		Municipal
129 Dodge City	Dodge City	1935		Small Town
130 El Dorado	El Dorado	1927		Small Town
131 Fort Scott	Fort Scott	1921		Small Town
132 Garden City	Garden City	1919		Small Town
133 Harper	Harper	1921	1921	Small Town
134 Highland	Highland	1937		Small Town
135 Holton	Holton	1919	1919	Small Town
136 Hutchinson	Hutchinson	1928		Municipal
137 Independence	Independence	1925		Municipal
138 Iola	Iola	1923		Small Town
139 Kansas City (NE)	Kansas City	1930	1936	Municipal
140 Kansas City	Kansas City	1923		Municipal
141 Marysville	Marysville	1919	1919	Small Town
142 Parsons	Parsons	1923		Municipal
143 Pratt	Pratt	1938		Small Town
Kentucky				
144 Ashland	Ashland	1938		Municipal
145 Paducah	Paducah	1932		Municipal

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
Louisiana				
146 Haynesville	Haynesville	1927	****	Small Town
147 Hammond	Hammond	1925	****	Small Town
148 Homer	Homer	1927	****	Small Town
149 Ouchita	Monroe	1928	1932	Municipal
Massachusetts				
150 Springfield	Springfield	1917		Municipal
Maryland				
151 Douglass	Baltimore City	1933	1936	Great City
152 Forest Park	Baltimore City	1932	1936	Great City
Michigan				
153 Bay City	Bay City	1922		Municipal
154 Detroit	Detroit	1915	1923	Great City
155 Flint	Flint	1923		Municipal
156 Gogebic	Ironwood City	1932		Municipal
157 Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids	1914		Municipal
158 Henry Ford	Deaborn	1938		Municipal
159 Highland Park	Highland Park	1918		Municipal
160 Jackson	Jackson	1928		Municipal
161 Muskegon	Muskegon	1926		Municipal
162 Pontiac	Pontiac	1918	****	Municipal
163 Port Huron	Port Huron	1923		Municipal
164 St. Clair	St. Clair	1923	****	Small Town
Minnesota				
165 Albert Lea	Albert Lea	1938	1943	Small Town
166 Brainerd	Brainerd	1938		Small Town
167 Cloquet	Cloquet	1914	1918	Small Town
168 Crosby-Ironton	Crosby	1937		Small Town
169 Duluth	Duluth	1927		Municipal
170 Ely	Ely	1922		Small Town
171 Eveleth	Eveleth	1919		Small Town
172 Fairbault	Fairbault	1915	1918	Municipal
173 Hibbing	Hibbing	1916		Municipal
174 Itasca	Coleraine	1922		Small Town
175 Jackson	Jackson	1916	1918	Small Town
176 Pipestone	Pipestone	1919	1923	Small Town
177 Rochester	Rochester	1915		Municipal
178 Tracy	Tracy	1936		Small Town
179 Virginia	Virginia	1921		Small Town
180 Worthington	Worthington	1936		Small Town

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
Missouri				
181 Caruthersville	Caruthersville	1928	****	Small Town
182 Jefferson City	Jefferson City	1926		Municipal
183 Joplin	Joplin	1937		Municipal
184 Flat River	Flat River	1922		Small Town
185 Kansas City	Kansas City	1915		Great City
186 Lincoln	Kansas City	1935		Great City
187 Moberly	Moberly	1927		Municipal
188 Monett	Monett	1927	****	Small Town
189 St. Joseph	St. Joseph	1915		Municipal
190 Trenton	Trenton	1925		Small Town
191 WPA Fresh. College	Maplewood	1934	****	Municipal
Mississippi				
192 Copiah-Lincoln	Wesson	1928		Small Town
193 East Central	Decatur	1928		Small Town
194 East MS	Scooba	1927		Small Town
195 Harris	Meridian	1937		Municipal
196 Harrison-Stone-Jackson	Perkinston	1925		Small Town
197 Hinds	Raymond	1922		Small Town
198 Holmes	Goodman	1925		Small Town
199 Jones	Ellisville	1927		Small Town
200 Leake	Carthage	1927	****	Small Town
201 Meridian	Meridian	1937		Municipal
202 Pearl River	Poplarville	1921		Small Town
203 Southwest MS	Summit	1929		Small Town
204 Simpson	Magee	1927	1929	Small Town
205 Sunflower	Moorehead	1926		Small Town
206 Northwest MS	Senatobia	1926		Small Town
Montana				
207 Custer	Miles	1939		Small Town
Nebraska				
208 Grand Island	Grand Island	1931	1932	Municipal
209 McCook	McCook	1926		Small Town
210 Norfolk	Norfolk	1928	1932	Small Town
211 Scottsbluff	Scottsbluff	1926		Small Town
212 Walthill	Walthill	1928	1932	Small Town
New York				
213Rockland	Nyack	1932	1935	Municipal
North Carolina				
214 Biltmore	Asheville	1927		Municipal
North Dakota				

215 Bismark	Bismark	1939		Small Town

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
New Jersey				
216 Newark	Newark	1918	1922	Great City
217 Essex	Newark	1933	1936	Great City
218 Middlesex	Perth Amboy	1933	1942	Municipal
219 Monmouth	Long Branch	1933	1936	Municipal
220 Morris	Morristown	1933	1942	Municipal
221 Passaic	Paterson	1933	1936	Municipal
222 Union	Roselle	1933	1936	Municipal
Oklahoma				
223 Altus	Atlus	1925		Small Town
224 Bartlesville	Bartlesville	1927		Municipal
225 Bristow	Bristow	1928		Small Town
226 Capital Hill	Oklahoma City	1935		Municipal
227 Carnegie	Carnegie	1938		Small Town
228 Chicosha	Chicosha	1924	****	Municipal
229 Duncan	Duncan	1937		Small Town
230 Elk City	Elk City	1924	****	Small Town
233 El Reno	El Reno	1938		Small Town
234 Holdenville	Holdenville	1939		Small Town
235 Kiowa	Kiowa	1934	****	Small Town
236 Lawton	Lawton	1923	****	Small Town
237 Mangum	Mangum	1937		Small Town
238 McAlester	McAlester	1926	****	Small Town
240 Muskogee	Muskogee	1920		Municipal
241 Okemah	Okemah	1933	1939	Small Town
242 Okmulgee	Okmulgee	1926		Municipal
243 Pawnee	Pawnee	1934	1939	Small Town
244 Pauls Valley	Pauls Valley	1923	****	Small Town
245 Ponca City	Ponca City	1928	1929	Municipal
246 Poteau	Poteau	1934	****	Small Town
247 Pryor	Pryor	1938	1939	Small Town
248 Sapula	Sapula	1932		Small Town
249 Sayre	Sayre	1938		Small Town
250 Seminole	Seminole	1931		Small Town
251 Shidler	Shidler	1936		Small Town
253 Tillman	Frederick City	1938	****	Small Town
254 Wetumka	Wetumka	1938		Small Town
255 Woodward	Woodward	1932		Small Town
Pennsylvania				
256 Hersey	Hersey	1938		Municipal

State Junior College	Community	Yr Opened	Yr Closed	Type
Texas				
257 Amarillo	Amarillo	1929		Municipal
258 Blinn Memorial	Brenham	1937		Small Town
259 Brownsville	Brownsville	1926		Municipal
260 Clarendon	Clarendon	1926		Small Town
261 Corpus Christi	Corpus Christi	1935		Municipal
262 Edinburg	Edinburg	1927		Small Town
263 El Paso	El Paso	1920	****	Municipal
264 Gainesville	Gainesville	1924		Small Town
265 Hardin	Wichita Falls	1922		Municipal
266 Hillsboro	Hillsboro	1923		Small Town
267 Houston	Houston	1927	1933	Great City
268 Houston Colored	Houston	1927	1947	Great City
269 Kilgore	Kilgore	1935		Municipal
270 Lee	Grosse Creek	1934		Small town
271 Paris	Paris	1924		Municipal
272 Ranger	Ranger	1922		Small Town
273 San Antonio	San Antonio	1925		Municipal
274 San Angelo	San Angelo	1927		Municipal
275 South Park	Beaumont	1923	****	Municipal
276 Temple	Temple	1926		Municipal
277 Texarkana	Texarkana	1927		Municipal
278 Tyler	Tyler	1926		Municipal
279 Victoria	Victoria	1925		Small Town
Washington				
280 Centralia	Centralia	1925	1929	Small Town
281 Everett	Everett	1915	1927	Municipal
282 Grays Harbor	Aberdeen City	1920	1929	Municipal
283 Mount Vernon	Mount Vernon	1926	1929	Small Town
284 Yakima Valley	Yakima	1928	1929	Municipal

Note: Those instances where evidence is insufficient to establish an exact date are indicated by the symbols: ****.

Table 4
Total Number and Discontinued Early Public Junior Colleges by Community Type, 1900-1940

	Number Established	Number Discontinued	Percent Discontinued
Small Town Junior College	140	36	25.7%
Small City Junior Colleges	117	28	23.9%
Great City Junior Colleges	21	11	52.4%

Chapter III

Community Interests and the Municipal Junior College

Introduction

The opening chapter challenged the conventional explanation of the junior college's origins on several fronts. It raised issue with its use of unverified secondary sources, its flawed logic, and its unfounded assumptions. But most importantly, the first chapter questioned the characterization of the junior college as a unique phenomenon, the instrument of a great, national movement intent on fundamentally transforming an elitist higher education into a democratic and socially-efficient system of advanced learning.

More specifically, the first chapter focused its critique of junior college historiography on two points. First, it turned to the historical record to demonstrate that the junior college embodied no egalitarian ideology intent upon opening wide the doors of American higher education. Rather, the junior college is far better explained, it was argued, as a local phenomenon, one

manifestation of the widespread programmatic experimentation being undertaken by a rapidly developing secondary education in response to local interests and conditions. Moreover, as was evident from the close examination of the admission and tuition policies of early public junior colleges, there was nothing radical about this experimentation. In its organization, purposes, and values, the public junior college was far more derivative than innovative. As will be more fully developed in this chapter, the public junior college's sponsors -- local school board members, parents, and civic leaders -- sought to use this institution to achieve very conventional ends, and in pursuing these ends they invariably deferred to traditional practices and familiar forms.

Additionally, the first chapter argued against the prevailing view that certain early twentieth century university presidents played a leading role in the junior college's initial development. The single-minded pursuit of that elusive grail of a first cause that has marked the work of Vaughan, Witt, and others is simply misplaced, only serving to perpetuate the naive belief that a single journal article or obscure speech by a "visionary" educator provided communities as diverse as Chicago, Sacramento, and Fort Scott with the inspiration to sponsor

a junior college.[1] This view, it was observed, simply does not square with what is known to have been the highly independent character of early twentieth century school districts. In focusing on cosmopolitan influences, junior college historians have ignored the well-documented contributions of those now-forgotten parochials -- local schoolmen, community leaders, parents, and even students -- whose leadership created institutions of enduring significance.

As the opening chapter further argued, these historians have confused precedence with cause in their continuing attempt to attribute the emergence of the junior college to the influence of the university. As Fischer would almost certainly agree, the mere fact that Minnesota's William Watts Folwell may have once proposed that America's universities discontinue freshman and sophomore instruction in favor of the "higher learning," or that Stanford's Jordan sought to shift responsibility for these two years to the public high school, does not permit us to conclude that these proposals caused the

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[1] The most recent example of this quest is to be found in James L. Wattanbarger and Allen A. Witt, "Origins of the California System: How the Junior College Movement Came to California," Community College Review 22, no. 4 (Spring 1995): 17-25.

subsequent organization of public junior colleges. Absent convincing evidence, it seems far more likely and reasonable, given the autonomy of this era's local school districts, that civic leaders in such communities as Scottsbluff, Nebraska, and Garden City, Kansas, simply found the idea of appending a collegiate division to a public high school timely and useful, and then adopted this innovation without any particular thought as to its origins or to the ideology of its originators. The junior college would not have been the first instance in which a half-formed concept, advocated by someone of national prominence, was seized upon by parochials and turned to the service of their own unrelated and very specific purposes.

Setting aside any further criticism of the conventional description of the junior college's early history, this chapter will build on the inventory of junior colleges and their sponsoring communities with which the second chapter concluded to advance an alternative explanation of public junior college that begins with a recognition of its fundamentally parochial character. Central to this explanation will be the

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David Hackett Fischer, Historians' Fallacies, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1970), 166-167.

presumption that civic-minded Americans of the years between 1900 and 1940, whether in large cities or small, were far from passive onlookers to the rationalization of American schooling that had begun in earnest toward the end of the nineteenth century. As this and the next chapter will document, it was the "leading" men and women of communities as diverse as Newark, New Jersey, and San Mateo, California, who gave impetus to the junior college. Working primarily through community alliances, these men and women used their virtually unchecked control over their local schools to test the limits of their authority, and it was in this context that the junior college arose. Moreover, there was nothing spontaneous or capricious about these local initiatives. As the historical record amply demonstrates, from one community to the next each step in the expansion of the public school's organization and purposes -- from the introduction of graded instruction to the establishment of comprehensive high schools -- was carefully weighed, often hotly debated, and put to the vote before it was carried forward.[1]

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[1] For an extraordinarily fair and balanced description of such debate, see Augustine M. Antrobus, History of Des Moines County Iowa and Its People, (Chicago: The S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915), 173-175. Antrobus recounts the struggle that took place in Burlington, Iowa, between 1865 and 1870 over whether the

Just as importantly, only rarely were the junior college's most vocal advocates motivated by that mix of crass self-interest, thoughtless emulation, and irrational boosterism for which they have been so often disparaged by Lange and others.[4] As with the kindergarten and manual

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city would organize and construct a public high school. The conflict came to a head at the Burlington School Board's annual meeting of May, 1870, when, after extensive debate, and a failed attempt by the anti-high school faction to divert funds intended for construction of the new high school to the grammar schools, a division of those present was called and the high school's supporters won the day by a slim majority. To secure their victory, the high school's proponents immediately voted a 3 mill levy to purchase the defunct Burlington University campus, upon which the city's new high school was constructed, admitting its first students in 1873. In 1918, the high school building would become home to Iowa's first public junior college.

[4] Amos Gray, writing in 1915, was the first to question the motives of early junior college sponsors. It was his view that civic leaders established junior colleges out of a rather ignoble mix of greed and civic vanity:

> There can be little doubt that after the newness of the junior college has passed away, many small high school[s] will become ambitious to join the "college circle" and, goaded on by real estate interests and community pride, will begin to organize junior colleges.

Gray, "The Junior College," 121. In his representation of parochials, Gray was only echoing the sentiments of his thesis advisor at Berkeley, Alexis Lange. According to Lange:

> the rapid multiplication of junior colleges, since the first one was established at Fresno, is partly owing to intercommunal bell-weather-and-sheep relations combined with the spirit of emulation.

education, a complex set of motives -- some noble and sincere, others unquestionably self-interested, but none venial or crass -- inspired and sustained a community's sponsorship of a public junior college. From this perspective, the junior college was no mere stratagem, conceived by a few visionary schoolmen as part of a larger effort to fundamentally alter the structure of American schooling. Rather, the nearly 300 junior colleges established in the first four decades of this century were a manifestation of this era's remarkably optimistic parochialism, which held that every community, regardless of its objective conditions, could, with sacrifice, vision, and a bit of luck, transform itself into a thriving and dynamic center of commerce and culture, a second New York or Chicago.[5]

Missouri's A. Ross Hill and the University of Chicago's Leonard Koos were nc less suspicious of local motives, with Hill singling out "ambitious principals" for criticism. See A. Ross Hill, "The Junior College," Proceedings of the National Association of State Universities, 13 (1915): 127. For Zook's views, see Zook, "The Junior College," 581.

[5] In this sense, every aspiring community consciously sought to imitate the success of America's great cities in overcoming natural obstacles to their growth, with Chicago serving as their model. If Chicago could literally raise itself by three feet, reverse the course of a river, and host the greatest fair of the nineteenth century, what could keep a San Diego or Joliet from overcoming their own

Kansas City Junior College:
The "Outgrowth of a Local Situation"

Few institutions better illustrate the interplay of local conditions and parochial interests that set the stage for the establishment of many public junior colleges than Missouri's Kansas City Junior College. Founded in 1915, Kansas City Junior College (KCJC) was among the most successful of the early junior colleges.[9] Within just a decade of its opening, and at a time when the vast majority of junior colleges still enrolled fewer than 75 students, KCJC enrolled nearly 400 students and its dean, Edward Bainter, had served a term as president of the fledgling American Association of Junior Colleges. As local records fully document, no vague ideological impetus inspired this junior college. Rather, it was the product of several, entirely local conditions, including a rapidly growing pool of eligible students, steadily increasing

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challenges? From this perspective, establishing a public junior college, when a private benefactor could not be found to create a second University of Chicago, was a relatively small challenge.

[9] The junior college's success was immediate. While the school district's initial plan was to enroll only freshmen, "there was a sufficient number of students who had done freshmen work in college and universities" to justify the immediate offering of sophomore-level courses. See School District of Kansas City, Forty-Fifth Annual Report (Kansas City, MO: 1916), 27-28.

school revenue, and the press of certain unique problems facing the Kansas City district for which a public junior college represented the most pragmatic and reasonable solution.

1. The Context

Rogers and Hammerstein's characterization of Missouri's Kansas City as an "up-to-date" community was more than theatrical hyperbole. While lacking the population and national visibility of a Chicago or St. Louis, the Kansas City of 1915 provided its citizens with virtually every advantage afforded to the fortunate residents of a progressive and affluent American city of the early twentieth century. A variety of conditions favored the city's rapid development into a major metropolitan center. It was located at the juncture of the Kew and Missouri Rivers, it had developed into a major rail hub linking both Chicago and St. Louis to the West, and its citizenry was inspired by the vision of the Evening Star's founder and editor, William Rockhill Nelson. Kansas City was not only the site of the nation's largest grain elevators and one of the first skyscrapers west of Chicago, it could even boast of a major league baseball team (playing in the upstart Federal League) and, by 1922, a commercial radio station and the nation's first

shopping center specifically designed to accommodate automobiles. Any possible question of Kansas City's metropolitan status was settled in 1916. That year, Congress selected Kansas City as home to one of the twelve, highly-coveted Federal Reserve banks, bypassing Denver.

While not discounting the effects of William Rockhill Nelson's leadership, the key to Kansas City's successful transformation into a great city was the willingness of its citizens to bear the cost of a wide range of civic improvements. These improvements not only included such basics as paved roads, an imposing city hall, and an extensive park system, but were augmented by those institutions essential to a rich and varied cultural life. As early as 1890, for example, Kansas City's taxpayers not only took on the expense of an extraordinary public library (to which they added an art gallery in 1898) and a lyceum, but a system of public schools without peer between Chicago and California.

The capstone of Kansas City's public school system was its high schools. City voters repeatedly authorized

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Kansas City voters regularly approved special tax levies to strengthen their schools. The special levy approved in 1913, for example, allowed for the admission of five-year-olds to kindergarten in 1914.

bonds to construct large, well-equipped high schools every bit the equal of Joliet's famed Central High. Moreover, this support went beyond mere brick and mortar to include the programs offered within Kansas City's high schools. At a time when ungraded sod schools were still commonplace throughout the Plains states, the Kansas City school district not only offered a traditional academic curriculum but, through its High School of Mechanical Arts, a progressive vocational education along the lines advocated by St. Louis's Calvin Woodward. Additionally, the school district operated an extra-curriculum rich in athletic, artistic, and leadership opportunities.

2. A Challenge for the Kansas City Schools

Whether they were attracted by the comprehensive curriculum or the rich extra-curriculum, Kansas City's high schools proved remarkably successful in holding students during an era of high attrition. From 1890 onward, an ever-increasing percentage of Kansas City's youth enrolled in the city's high schools and persisted

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The high regard in which the Kansas City school system was held by American educators of the late nineteenth century is evidenced by the prominence of Kansas City's school superintendent, James M. Greenwood. Not only was Greenwood a member of the NEA's Committee of Fifteen, but he was among the most prominent critics of the Committee of Ten. See Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, 98.

through graduation. One would think that Superintendent James Greenwood might have taken some measure of satisfaction in his school system's holding power and the national recognition which followed. But by 1910, board minutes reveal his growing concern with the evident unwillingness of the city's high school graduates to pursue the baccalaureate. For reasons that he could not readily explain, the aspirations of Kansas City's young people did not extend beyond the high school diploma.

As was noted in the first chapter, college attendance early in this century was a costly undertaking of uncertain benefit. While this may have dampened the interest of some Kansas City graduates in college attendance, it is unlikely that considerations of cost alone provide a sufficient explanation for the reluctance of Kansas City's high school graduates to pursue a college degree. Kansas City was an affluent community, home to a great many families headed by professionals, and it was the children of these families who earned diplomas. One might reasonably expect that some of these young people would have pursued the baccalaureate if only to preserve their social standing at a time when the baccalaureate was rapidly gaining importance as prerequisite to a professional career.

Why, then, the apparent unwillingness of Kansas City's high school graduates to pursue higher learning? First, there was the matter of proximity. No college or university was located within a reasonable commuting distance of the city. For reasons largely associated with its relatively late development, the Kansas City of 1910 was, with the exception of Newark, New Jersey, the largest American city without a proximate college. For all their other accomplishments, Kansas City's civic leaders had been unable to secure a denominational college, state-supported normal college, or, as in Baltimore, Atlanta, Toledo, and Tulsa, a philanthropist's university.

The second barrier to college attendance facing Kansas City's high school graduates was related directly to the first. The graduates' parents -- like many other parents during this era -- were reluctant to allow their children to enroll in a college or university located in distant St. Louis or Columbia. It was not that these parents were unable to bear the financial burden of supporting a student's attendance at a residential college or university. Rather, this unwillingness stemmed from the popular belief that turn-of-the-century college and university faculty had abandoned their traditional responsibility for the undergraduate's moral development

in favor of their own disciplinary interests. While certainly a spur to scholarship, this new faculty independence was troubling to parents, as it left immature undergraduates to fend for themselves in a world of countless temptations and abundant free time. As will be described more fully later in this chapter, this concern was so widespread that a surprising number of early twentieth century parents chose to keep their high school graduates at home -- and out of temptation's way -- despite the baccalaureate's growing importance as the gateway to the professions.

In the case of Kansas City, parental concerns were heightened by the progressive organization of their community's public schools. In its pursuit of efficiency, the Kansas City school system had adopted an 11-year program.[1] While saving considerable sums for local taxpayers, this innovative program also resulted in

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[1] Even as late as 1910, the length of the school program preceding the award of a high school diploma varied greatly by region. In New England, and much to the annoyance of Harvard's Eliot, students remained in grade school for nine or ten years, so that they were 14 or even 15 years old when they entered high school. In California, however, public high schools were unconstitutional until 1911, so that grade schools provided eight years of instruction, augmented by 3-year "Caminetti schools" that offered an abbreviated high school program much like the quasi-high school William Maxwell had appended to Brooklyn's Central Grammar School two decades earlier.

diplomas being awarded to graduates of just 15 or 16 -- at a time when the average age of entering college freshmen was increasing steadily toward 18.[10] While Kansas City's young graduates may have acquired the academic skills prerequisite to college study, from the perspective of their parents they were simply too young to navigate the moral rapids of undergraduate life at Columbia or St. Louis.

The most direct approach to resolving this parental concern -- the extension of the school curriculum to a 12-year course -- was not a viable option for Kansas City's school board. Even discounting the logistical problems such a change would have entailed, the 11-year curriculum had powerful advocates in the community. Taxpayers, in particular, would have naturally resisted this change. The addition of a twelfth grade would have necessitated the construction of additional facilities and the employment of more faculty, almost certainly leading to an increased school levy. Moreover, and possibly even more importantly, the school board would have faced opposition from those students (and their parents) whose aspirations went no

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[10] Koos reported evidence of a steady increase in the age of the typical freshmen over the course of the nineteenth century. By 1899, the modal age was eighteen. See Koos, The Junior College, 241-250.

further than a high school diploma. Quite reasonably, these students would have questioned why they should be required to spend an additional year in school solely to accommodate the interests of the small minority of students with collegiate aspirations.

However, as the number of Kansas City's high school graduates rose steadily through the last decade of the nineteenth century, so did the number of parents disenchanted with their city's 11-year school program. As we read in school board minutes, even as early as 1895 parents began to voice their discontent with the city's abbreviated school program. As these parents noted, the school's 11-year curriculum left them with two, equally undesirable options. They could either send their young graduates immediately onto college, with all of its moral risks, or keep their children at home, and out of school, for a year or two before allowing them to leave home for college.[11] As they worried, during this two-year hiatus a graduate might marry, take a permanent job, or simply lose interest in further education. These parents, caught between their concern for their children's moral welfare

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[11] School District of Kansas City, Forty-Fourth Annual Report (Kansas City, MO: 1915), 28.

and their aspirations for their future, pressed the Kansas City school board for some solution to their conundrum.

3. Responding to the Challenge

For its part, the Kansas City school board could ill afford to ignore the concerns of the parents of its high school graduates. As was the case in Philadelphia, the school board's collective political interest was certainly best served by using all available resources to expand its grammar and high schools, which enrolled the vast majority of the city's young people. But board members also realized that the parents of high school graduates not only represented a growing block of voters, but that among their number were many of the community's leading citizens. This was one interest group board members ignored at their peril. Yet, at the same time, there was no self-evident answer to the board's quandary. In the 1890's, the line between high school and college was far from settled, nor would it be for the next two decades, and it was within this still fluid context the Kansas City school board initiated a twenty-year experiment with various organizational strategies in an attempt to balance the conflicting interests of taxpayers, the non-college

bound high school student, and the parents of high school graduates.

The first strategy tested by the Kansas City board was a small, limited postgraduate program, much like the contemporaneous initiatives at Joliet and Saginaw described in Chapter I. From the perspective of the Kansas City school board, such an upward extension of the high school curriculum must have seemed a reasonable, measured solution to its dilemma. For the parents of graduates, a local postgraduate program offered their children an academic way-station for a year or two of closely supervised study prior to their departure for a distant college or university. Even more importantly, taxpayers would have no reason to object to this new program. The addition of a postgraduate program not only preserved the 11-year school curriculum, but it required neither additional facilities nor teachers since, as was also the case in Joliet and Saginaw, Kansas City's postgraduates were not enrolled in separate courses, despite the impression given by their transcripts. Rather, these students were placed in existing high school classes, where they were assigned additional and more difficult work than was required of the high school students. Indeed, the only meaningful distinction one can discern

between Kansas City's postgraduates and regular high school students was that the postgraduates were excluded from the high school extra-curriculum.

Between 1895 and 1910, Kansas City's postgraduate program appears to have successfully balanced the interests of parents and taxpayers. Board minutes evidence no taxpayer opposition to the program even as postgraduate enrollments grew steadily, reaching a very respectable enrollment of 100 students by 1910. But after 1910, Kansas City school officials -- apparently echoing the sentiments of some parents -- expressed growing dissatisfaction with their postgraduate program.[12] For one thing, it seems that those postgraduates who went on to the University of Missouri were no longer receiving full credit for their postgraduate studies.[13] But much more seriously, Kansas

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[12] The parents and school leaders of Kansas city were not alone in their dissatisfaction. Edwin Saylor, in his history of Nebraska's Scottsbluff Junior College, reported that the Scottsbluff school board's decision to establish a junior college in 1926 could be attributed in part to the perceived failings of its postgraduate program. Unfortunately, Saylor did not describe the exact nature of these failings. Galen Saylor, et al., Legislation, Finance, and Development of Public Junior Colleges, (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska, 1948), 116.

[13] The source of this problem was Kansas City's practice of mixing postgraduates and high school students in the same classroom. This caught the attention of college and university registrars, who quite reasonably questioned whether the postgraduates were receiving

City school officials were extremely concerned that some seniors, unhappy that the school board excluded postgraduates from participation in the high school's extra-curriculum, had struck upon a stratagem to preserve their extra-curricular eligibility at the same time that they enrolled for a fifth or even sixth year of high school courses. Rather ingeniously, some unspecified number of high school students simply did not apply for a diploma at the end of the eleventh year. By putting off the award of the diploma, these students were free to return the subsequent Fall as high school students, rather than as postgraduates, and simply enroll in courses they had not taken during their previous high school years. Through this simple subterfuge, these students continued their schooling, to the satisfaction of their parents, while retaining their eligibility for school clubs and teams. As school officials complained, powerlessly, to the school board in 1915:

> many students with sufficient credits for graduation, deliberately postponed taking their

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instruction of a truly of collegiate grade. The University of Missouri's Registrar, Jesse H. Coursault, looked with particular disfavor on the practice of mixed enrollment. See Coursault, "Circular of Information to Accredited Junior Colleges," (1918).

diplomas in order to avail themselves of the privileges of the under-graduates.[14]

This practice, if left unchecked by the school board, obviously threatened Kansas City's 11-year curriculum. Not only did the school board risk losing the efficiencies it had gained from its shortened program, but widespread enrollment in a twelfth year of high school presented the equally serious danger that older students would co-mingle with far younger undergraduates through the high school's extra-curriculum, with all the difficulties that posed for the proper administration of student life.

Responding to these threats, in 1915 Kansas City's school board voted to reorganize its decades-old postgraduate program as a separate division, formally designated as a junior college. This action was not without cost (most notably, the school system sacrificed the efficiencies gained from joint enrollment when it separated high school and junior college students and

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[14] It seems reasonable to surmise that the students who experienced difficulties in transferring postgraduate credits to the University of Missouri were not the students about whom Kansas City school officials complained in this particular instance. This latter group of students likely were more interested in the extra-curriculum than pursuing a college degree. See School District of Kansas City, Forty-Fourth Annual Report, (Kansas City, MO: 1915), 28.

provided the latter with their own faculty and separate classroom space) but these costs were more than offset by the new institution's benefits. Not only did a junior college serve the interests of those parents who wanted their children to earn fully transferable credit while remaining at home for a year or two of college work, but it also allowed the district's postgraduates to organize their own extra-curriculum, replete with clubs, teams, and social events. There was even some advantage in this strategy for local taxpayers. The city's junior college could be expected to enroll tuition-paying graduates from surrounding school districts, including Kansas City, Kansas. Income from the tuition paid by these students would not only offset some of the junior college's direct costs, but these students would also represent new customers for the city's downtown businesses.

From its opening in 1915, Kansas City Junior College met every one of its sponsors' expectations. Its enrollment grew rapidly, and the new junior college quickly secured full accreditation for its courses from the University of Missouri. Its students built up a rich and varied extra-curriculum, and by 1923 the school proved so successful in attracting tuition-paying students from surrounding communities that Kansas City, Kansas,

established its own junior college, in part to stem the flow of young people and their money across the Missouri.[15] But for our purposes, what is significant about Kansas City Junior College was not its success, but that its founders were inspired by practical -- not ideological -- considerations. This junior college grew directly out of Kansas City's pragmatic assessment of its options in attempting to balance the conflicting interests of various local factions. The decision of the Kansas City school board to sponsor a junior college was neither sudden nor rushed, but came after an extended period of experimentation with, and eventual rejection of alternative strategies. The fact that practical, immediate, and entirely parochial considerations led to the organization of Kansas City's junior college was even acknowledged by its founders. As the school's first dean, Edward Bainter, summarized matters in 1921, Kansas City Junior College "was the outgrowth of a local situation."[16]

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[15] Kansas City Community College, Institutional Self-Study, mimeograph, (Kansas City, KS: 1975), 1-2.

[16] Edward Bainter, The Administration and Control of Public Junior Colleges, Bureau of Education Bulletin, no. 19 (Washington DC: 1922), 18. Just two years later, James Angell used the opportunity of a speech before the Junior College Union of Missouri to endorse the kind of pragmatism shown by the Kansas City school board. Speaking of the principles that should guide junior college

development, Angell counseled against "dogmatism." He argued instead that "[t]he wholesome thing at this stage of the game is unquestionably to formulate clearly the problems presented, to seek intelligently their solution, and to judge objectively, as time goes by, of the success or failure of the various methods investigated." See James Angell, "Problems Peculiar to the Junior Colleges," The School Review 25, no. 6 (1917): 385.

The Small City and the Municipal Junior College

1. Introduction

As a practical matter, no one history can describe the origin of every junior college with the same degree of detail we have given over to the organization of Kansas City's junior college. The number of early public junior colleges simply precludes such an attempt. But neither should generalizations be based on developments at just one or two prominent junior colleges. As was shown in Chapter II, junior colleges were established in cities and towns of virtually every size and circumstance, from the great and prosperous cities of Chicago and Los Angeles to such small and struggling towns as Holton, Kansas, and Cresco, Iowa. To ensure that the communities and their junior colleges of every type receive balanced consideration, this chapter will examine a representative sample of municipal junior colleges, while Chapter IV will examine small town and great city junior colleges.

At the same time, preserving the integrity of this work requires that all three analyses employ a uniform methodology. To this end, each analysis will begin with a description of the economic, cultural, and demographic conditions that provided the objective conditions that led

communities of a common type to consider junior college sponsorship. But just as importantly, it will not be assumed that these conditions also explain the willingness of these communities, once the decision to establish a junior college had been made, to sustain this commitment. For this reason, those conditions that led communities to continue (or, as happened in a number of instances, suspend) their junior colleges in subsequent years will also be examined. Moreover, as a major focus of each discussion we will attempt to answer the following, closely related questions. First, why did so many early twentieth century communities feel compelled to act on their own behalf, often without explicit legislative authority, to provide their residents with proximate higher education? Second, what led these communities to break from the traditional American practice of leaving the sponsorship of higher education to religious denominations, private enterprise, or state legislatures? Finally, why in a nation of a great many poorly enrolled, struggling colleges, did school districts add an entirely new sector of collegiate institutions to compete for what remained, through much of this period, a very small pool of qualified students?

Of the three general types, the municipal or small city junior college warrants our first consideration. Not only did schools of this type enroll a majority of all public junior college students from 1920 onward, but they proved far more stable than either small town or great city junior colleges, rarely being forced to close by a reversal in public sentiment or economic calamity, nor were any converted into a standard college or municipal university. Moreover, we cannot disregard the fact that municipal junior colleges were disproportionately concentrated in California, whose system of junior colleges has often been described, whether rightly or wrongly, as foreshadowing "in rather considerable measure the trends and movements of other states."[17]

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[17] Walter E. Morgan, "Junior College Developments in California, The Junior College Journal 1, no. 2 (1930): 64. This is one of the most prevalent themes within the junior college literature and has severely distorted our understanding of junior college development in other states. Alexis Lange was the first to assign California a leading role in the development of the public junior college, what he referred to as the "so-called 'California idea.'" See Lange, "The Junior College, with Special Reference to California", 119. See also William Martin Proctor, "California's Contributions to the Junior College Movement," in The Junior College: Its Organization and Administration, (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1927), 6; Eells, Bibliography on Junior Colleges, vii, and Fields, The Junior College Movement, 30. The persistence of this view is seen in David O. Levine's chapter on the junior college in The American College and the Culture of Aspiration: 1915 - 1940. Levine begins with an extended

2. The Broader Setting

While the popular imagination associates America's urbanization at the opening of this century with the explosive growth of New York and the nation's other great coastal cities, this phenomenon no less dramatically transformed many of the sparsely populated states to the south and west of Chicago. A region that had known only isolated farms and mines, open ranges, great forests, and expansive deserts was, after 1900, transformed by the creation of several hundred entirely new cities along the nation's rapidly expanding rail and highway networks. As census figures reveal, between 1910 and 1930 the number of small American cities more than doubled, from 425 to 889 (see Table 4). In some states the increase was particularly dramatic. As late as 1910 Oklahoma could claim just seven cities with a population of at least 10,000. By 1930 that number had grown to seventeen.

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discussion of university desires for efficiency and fear of "democratization," then concentrates on specific efforts by the California government to fashion a strictly hierarchical "system" with junior colleges relegated to the bottom, left to offer "terminal" programs in low-prestige occupations. His concluding remarks imply that this role was eventually adopted nationwide in the name of "social efficiency." See Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 162-184.

Table 5
Comparison of Growth in the Number of U.S. Great and Small Cities, 1910 - 1930

	1910	1920	1930	Percent Change
Small City (12,500-250,000)	425	721	889	47.8%
Great City (>250,000)	15	25	37	40.5%

Many of these cities -- among them El Paso, Phoenix, and Jefferson City -- were located along major rivers or rail lines and functioned as centers of commercial exchange -- isthmuses linking the industrial centers of Chicago, St. Louis, New York, and Philadelphia with the great expanse of rural America. These small cities provided the nexus for the efficient exchange of the raw products of rural America for the industrial, commercial, and intellectual goods of the great city's factories, merchant houses, and publishers. In the process, these small cities drew otherwise isolated towns and villages into the increasingly integrated and cosmopolitan national economy.[15]

[15] The development of a national beef industry typifies this broad and dramatic trend, reflecting the combined influence of advances in transportation, communication, and mass marketing in breaking down economic parochialism.

Two communities -- Nebraska's Scottsbluff and Oklahoma's Muskogee -- best exemplify this general pattern of small city development. Both achieved regional prominence after 1900 and, of particular relevance to our purposes, each elected to establish a public junior college in the 1920s. Scottsbluff, the westernmost of Nebraska's cities, was no more than a trading outpost as late as 1890. But the extension of a major Burlington rail line through the town in 1900, followed by the introduction of large-scale irrigated farming along the North Platte River, quickly transformed Scottsbluff into the center of commerce, transportation, government, and culture for the Nebraska panhandle.[20] Beginning with fewer

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[20] As we will see, proximity to major rail and road networks was a common feature of the municipalities that sponsored early junior colleges. Especially in the West, such access was a prerequisite to the rapid civic growth that typically preceded the establishment of a junior college. Scottsbluff would benefit from the extension of a rail line, Kansas's Fort Scott prospered following the development of an all-weather highway system, while Joliet saw its fortunes enhanced by the completion of a canal and railroad trunk line. As early as 1929, George S. Counts pointed out the inter-relationship of improvements in the "means of transportation and communication," civic growth, and an increased demand for formal schooling. In part, Counts argued, these three trends reflected the larger integration of American society, of which the comprehensive high school was simply a manifestation. But Counts also recognized that at a much more basic level improved transportation made increased school attendance more "practically possible" in a "relatively thinly populated country." It is no coincidence that public

than 2,000 residents at the turn of the century, the city of Scottsbluff and its adjacent communities grew to a population of more than 15,000 by 1930 and, in the process, assembled those institutions we associate with an urban center. Its first churches, hotel, and mercantile establishments were constructed almost immediately following the arrival of the railroad. By 1903 Scottsbluff had incorporated and the city's small high school graduated its first class in 1908. Cultural interests were not ignored by its civic leaders. Py 1910 an opera house (which would later became home to the lyceum) and a Chautauqua building were in place, and by 1920 high school enrollment had grown sufficiently to support a small

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junior colleges emerged in the decade after Henry Ford had set out to democratize the car and states and wealthier communities introduced the first all-weather road systems, a point which will be more fully developed in Chapter IV. While not intended to make education more accessible, these developments did just that, by extending the catchment of a junior college far beyond the city limits of its sponsoring school district. By the mid-1920s, a daily commute of 15 or even 20 miles, over paved roads, was no longer a major obstacle for those students of rural Kansas, Oklahoma, and Iowa fortunate enough to live near a junior college and to own a car. George S. Counts, "Selection is a Function of American Secondary Education," National Education Association Proceedings 67 (1929): 598.

postgraduate program. The groundwork had been laid for a junior college.[21]

Muskogee, Oklahoma, was equally well positioned for rapid civic development. Incorporated in 1872, Muskogee grew to a population of nearly 30,000 by 1890 and had become a major regional transportation hub, a center of commerce, and, as a headquarters of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, home to a large number of professionals. As Cotton found in 1928, most of Muskogee's residents followed "commercial and professional pursuits," while others engaged in small-scale farming or worked for the local railroad. Virtually none labored in factories or foundries.[22]

Muskogee's public schools benefitted tremendously from civic growth, enjoying what was, for the time, an exceptionally strong tax base. With an assessment of about $30 million in the mid-1920s, Muskogee's school board could easily absorb the costs of elementary and secondary schools within its state-mandated taxing limit of fifteen mills. The city's large assessed valuation also

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[21] Elizabeth Hughes Thies, "Scottsbluff's Social Development," in Scottsbluff and the North Platte Valley, (Scottsbluff, NB: Scottsbluff Star-Herald, 1967), 67-71.

[22] Cotton, "The Local Public Junior College in Oklahoma," 33.

allowed the school district to bond for the construction of any needed school facilities. By 1920 Muskogee had constructed a comprehensive high school even larger than Joliet's Central High, with the capacity to house 2,000 students and a small junior college.

While both Scottsbluff and Muskogee, like many other of this era's new municipalities, may have been in a position to support the more costly ornaments of urban life, including marble-fronted public libraries and palatial city halls, what led these communities to cap their institution-building efforts with a public junior college? Why, in a nation that had traditionally shown a preference for small, denominationally-controlled colleges or state-funded universities, did these communities choose to take on the expense of the relatively untested public junior college?

In comparing Scottsbluff and Muskogee with other municipalities that also established junior colleges during this period, it appears that their sponsorship decisions were influenced most directly by three common conditions. First, these communities had been bypassed by the wave of college foundings carried out by religious denominations and state governments over the course of the early to mid-nineteenth century. With rare exception, no

college or university was located within 50 miles of any of these cities.[1] Second, despite their distance from established institutions of higher education, these municipalities had constructed large, comprehensive high schools between 1900 and 1920. These high schools had the capacity to enroll between 1,500 and 2,000 students -- about six times the number of students enrolled in the typical private college of the early twentieth century. Last, rapid growth and concurrent commercial development brought with it an unprecedented level of community affluence. It was not simply that these cities enjoyed the benefits of a strong tax base. Just as importantly, their business communities were in a position to provide additional funds, through subventions and tuition guarantees, that lessened the burden of a junior college on taxpayers. Edwin Saylor, in his brief history of Scottsbluff Junior College, highlights the interplay of just these conditions in explaining Scottsbluff's decision to establish a junior college:

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[1] Well into the 1940's, repeated studies found that the natural catchment of colleges and universities, whether public or private, was circumscribed by a radius of 40 miles. Twelve of these studies are summarized in Robert Brody Patrick's "Criteria for the Location of Public Junior Colleges in Pennsylvania" (Ed.D. diss, Teachers College, 1949), 11-14.

> Scottsbluff seemed to be an ideal center for a junior college. The population had reached 10,000 and was steadily increasing. The town, located more than 100 miles from any institution of higher learning, drew trade from ten smaller towns within a radius of 25 miles. The [K-12] school enrollment ranked fifth largest in the state.[24]

A simple mapping of municipal junior colleges confirms the close relationship between a city's distance from established colleges and its decision to sponsor a junior college. In the case of Nebraska, as depicted in figure 4, four of the five communities that sponsored a public junior college before 1940 were located at least 150 miles to the north and west of Omaha and 125 miles from the state university at Lincoln. Nor were Nebraska's numerous small, denominational colleges any more accessible, with all but one found in the state's

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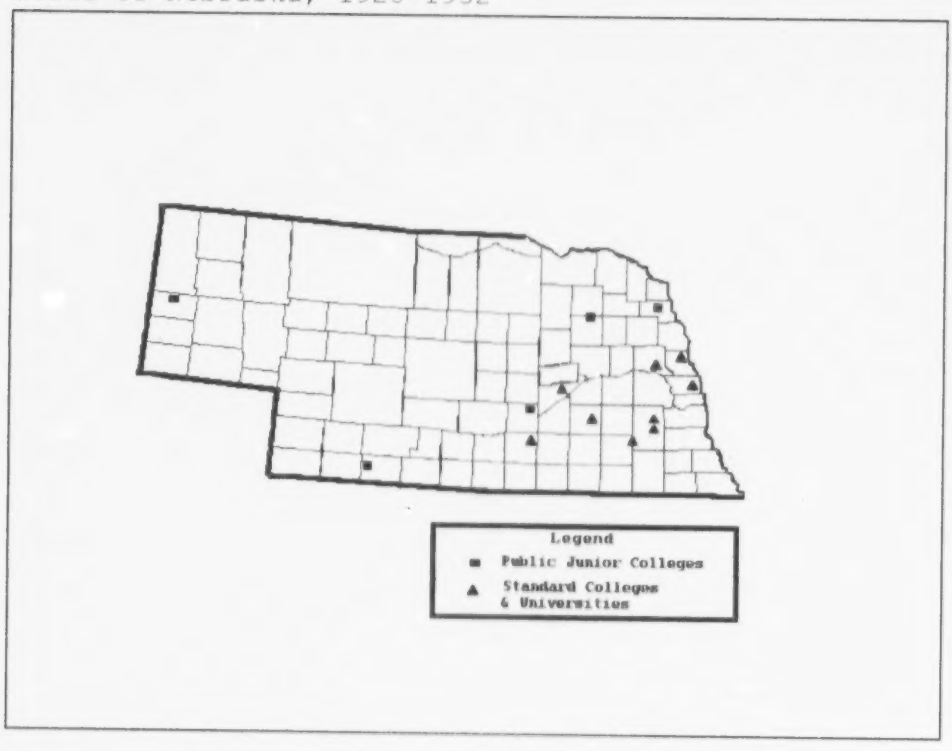
[24] See Saylor, Legislation, Finance, and Development of Public Junior College, x. In 1938, the editor of the Junior College Journal offered a virtually identical explanation of Joplin, Missouri's decision to establish a junior college:

> Joplin, with 34,000 inhabitants surrounded by a dozen...towns, situated as it is almost across the state from the State University and 75 miles from the nearest college, furnishes a community that will easily provide a student body for a junior college.

See "New Missouri Junior College," Junior College Journal, 8, no. 4(1938): 197.

Fig. 4
Distribution of Colleges and Universities,
State of Nebraska, 1928-1932



southeastern corner and at some distance from the main Burlington rail line.

Moreover, the pattern of college founding in Nebraska, with an initial wave of denominational and state colleges, tightly clustered in one corner of the state, being followed some decades later by a second wave of more

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The one exception was the Baptist's Grand Island College. However, this school was relatively expensive and poorly endowed. In 1931, the Baptists forced its merger with Sioux City College, relocating its faculty and students to the Iowa college.

widely scattered public junior colleges, was not unique. Coleman Griffin, for example, observed that the earliest public junior colleges in Illinois were concentrated in the state's northwestern corner, far removed from its two public universities and virtually all of its private colleges.[1] Iowa shows a similar pattern. As late as 1916, only four of Iowa's 26 colleges and universities were located west of Des Moines, even though the state's population was evenly distributed from east to west.[2] It was only with the creation of public junior colleges, the

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[1] Coleman R. Griffith and Hortense Blackstone, The Junior College in Illinois (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1945), 15. Smolich has argued that even in the case of Joliet, located just 45 miles southwest of Chicago, "remoteness" and "transportation difficulties" were among the reasons that led the Joliet board to expand its postgraduate program into a junior college. See Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 103.

[2] Bureau of Education, State Higher Educational Institutions of Iowa," Bulletin, no. 19 (Washington: 1916), 25-26. Oklahoma offers yet another example of this pattern, if one takes into account the effects of the oil boom on the state's eastern side. Of the 19 public junior colleges open in 1939, ten were located to the west of Oklahoma City in every community with a population of more than 2,500 that was outside commuting distance of a state or private college. The remaining nine junior colleges, according to State Superintendent of Instruction A. L. Crable, were to be found in those communities surrounding Tulsa "that have experienced oil development." See Oklahoma Department of Education, The Eighteenth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Oklahoma City, 1940), 76-77.

first being established in 1918 in Mason City, that residents of Iowa's western communities gained access to proximate higher education.

The second condition to influence the establishment of municipal junior colleges was the increase in the number of high school graduates that followed from the construction of large, comprehensive high schools after 1900.[25] This increase was little short of phenomenal. As late as 1910, only 156,000 high school diplomas were awarded nation-wide, being earned by 8.8 percent of seventeen-year-old's. Just a decade later, the number of diplomas awarded had grown to 311,000, and this number would more than double again -- to 667,000 -- by 1930. That year, nearly 30 percent of seventeen-year-old's earned a diploma.[26]

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[25] There is, of course, the question of whether the buildings or the students came first. At least in the case of Joliet's Central High School, it seems that the building awaited the students. Completed in 1900, Central High was intended to enroll 1200 students. At its opening, however, only 600 students enrolled. It was not until 1915 that the number of students actually filled the available space, necessitating the construction of the building's junior college wing.

[26] Department of Education, Digest of Education Statistics: 1988, Table 77 (Washington, DC: 1988), 98. It should be acknowledged that these numbers are somewhat misleading. Early in the century many colleges still enrolled a number of academy students. These students did not generally earn diplomas, and so are not reflected in

In part, the growth in the number of students earning a high school diploma followed from the decision of America's growing municipalities, such as Joliet, Kansas City, and Muskogee, to construct and staff comprehensive high schools offering not only a broad curriculum but a wide range of social and athletic activities. As we saw in the case of Kansas City's high schools, it was this combination of a differentiated curriculum and a rich extra-curriculum that made high school attendance attractive to the broadest possible range of young people and retained them to graduation.[30] Further, and while certainly not an intended outcome, the holding power of these high schools created a body of college-eligible

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the Department of Education's figures, but some certainly continued on to earn the baccalaureate. By 1915 the increasing number of comprehensive high schools effectively shut down college-run academies, likely because they, unlike the academies, were tuition-free. However, the total number of academy students at the turn of the century was not large enough to contradict the general trend we have described.

[30] Krug, for one, seems at something of a loss to explain the "sheer physical expansion" of the public high schools and student enrollments after 1900. If the experience of the Kansas City high schools is any indication, at least some young people were drawn to high school for social, rather than academic reasons. It was, after all, to retain their eligibility for extracurricular activities that Kansas City's 11th year students avoided taking their diplomas and continued on for an additional year, despite the option of postgraduate status. Krug, The Shaping of the American High School, 439.

graduates large enough not only to fuel the enrollment growth of the flagship state universities, but also to allow for the efficient operation of a local junior college. During the early 1920s, Muskogee's high school graduated about 200 students annually out of a total enrollment of 2,000, and virtually all of the school's graduates were eligible for college admission. While 50 to 100 graduates apparently left Muskogee to attend college elsewhere, approximately 100 to 150 remained behind. It was this group of students, whose reasons for remaining in Muskogee will be discussed below, which formed the nucleus of a student body twice the minimum enrollment required by the North Central Association of its accredited junior colleges.

A third condition associated with the emergence of the municipal junior college was a strong and growing local economy. While a fact too often overlooked by junior college historians, public junior colleges were not free.[1] At a minimum, a school board in a city the size of

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[1] By the early 1920s, Leonard Koos and others had studied a sufficient number of junior colleges to predict with some confidence their costs and their potential impact on local tax rates. As a rule, a public high school of this period that served a small city with a population of 10,000, surrounded by farming communities with a population of another 40,000, and having no other proximate college, could expect to award diplomas to 200

Muskogee could expect to spend several thousand dollars prior to opening a junior college merely for improvements in its high school's science laboratories and for the purchase of library books. The board could then expect continuing expenses of about $2,000 a year to staff and operate its junior college if enrollment remained below 100 students, and this figure assumes that the school district allocated all of the junior college's administrative, maintenance, and capital expenses to the high school.

Fortunately for local junior college advocates, after 1900 many of America's school districts saw increases in their property assessments that more than offset the costs of growing school enrollments.[N] In Iowa, for example,

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students yearly and, from this group, enroll 75 students in its junior college. In order to offer a reasonably complete, albeit traditional curriculum without charging a substantial tuition, the junior college's sponsoring school district would be required to increase its local tax rate between seven and ten percent. For a detailed discussion of the potential tax consequences of a public junior college, see Prall, "Report of the Junior College Survey Committee," 18-19. For Koos's findings, see Table 5, below.

[N] This trend was particularly beneficial for many small city school districts. The taxing authority of these districts typically extended well beyond municipal borders to include surrounding farm land. This worked to the decided advantage of the school district, since both its annual revenue and bonding authority was tied to the valuation of its entire district. The tremendous increase

farm values more than doubled between 1910 and 1920, going from $3.3 billion to $7.6 billion, while in Texas farm assessments increased from $1.8 billion to $3.7 billion.[11] Not simply because of their own growth, but because of the dramatic increase in the value of adjacent farmlands, small cities saw their revenues grow steadily after 1900 without the need for a significant and politically risky increase in the local tax rate.

The phenomenal growth in property assessments in such states as California, Iowa, Texas, and Kansas allowed communities, through their school districts, to spend nearly three times as much on public schooling in 1920 as they had in 1910. Not only did public schooling

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in the appraised value of farm land, especially after 1900 in the states of Iowa, Michigan, Texas, and Kansas, created a windfall for these districts without any offsetting population increase. Since, by 1900, grammar school enrollment in these districts was all but universal, much of this windfall could be directed to the support of the still under-enrolled high schools, without any fear of public outcry that the grammar schools were being shortchanged in the process.

[11] Bureau of the Census, Fourteenth Census of the United States, "Summary -- United States," Table 44 (Washington, DC: 1923), n.p.. Scottsbluff was especially fortunate in this regard. Several irrigation projects transformed large tracts within the district into some of the most valuable farmland in the United States as one of the nation's major producers of sugar beets. School district assessments were aided further when Western Sugar located a large sugar beet mill in the city in 1910.

expenditures grow during this period from just slightly more than $330 million to about $1.2 billion, but per-student expenditures nearly doubled, even when computed in constant dollars.[14] However persuasive we might now find Eells's decidedly ideological explanation of the rise of the junior college, it was this tremendous growth in tax revenue that gave school boards the freedom to hire the faculty and equip the science laboratories required by a public junior college, just as it enabled them to add kindergartens, middle schools, and the other hallmarks of a progressive school system.

Less directly, but just as importantly, municipal junior colleges benefitted from the increased bonding authority school districts gained through growing property assessments. At a time when state governments felt no particular obligation to underwrite school construction and a "pay as you go" approach would have required a school district to accumulate politically unpopular cash reserves, general obligation bonds provided school

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[14] When computed in constant dollars, American school districts spent $29 per pupil in average daily attendance in 1910. By 1921, that amount had grown to $67, and reached $88 by 1939. See US Department of Education, 120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait (Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1993), 60.

districts with an alternative mechanism for financing the construction of comprehensive high schools and spread the cost over several decades. Even though many states limited the bonding authority of school districts to a fixed percentage of their assessed valuation (typically no more then five percent), the era's steadily growing property assessments provided many districts with an unprecedented level of bonding authority. For the first time, school districts outside the nation's large cities could afford to construct a high school capable of housing several thousand students, replete with college-style laboratories, a football stadium, and even a swimming pool, and these districts seized upon this opportunity with enthusiasm.[11]

Although overlooked by junior college historians, the connection between high school construction and the founding of a municipal junior college was often quite direct. The Joliet and Kansas City school boards organized

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[11] We should not romanticize the reasoning that led small cities to construct such high schools. The motives of those who advocated school construction could be quite self-serving, as we will see later in this chapter. Many in a community profited from such construction -- architects, builders, merchants, and the like -- and these individuals played a prominent role in Chambers of Commerce, which routinely took the lead in winning public support for the sale of school construction bonds.

their junior colleges shortly after opening new high schools, as did the school boards of San Mateo, California, Goshen, Indiana, Fort Scott, Kansas, and Grand Rapids, Michigan." Even Alexis Lange, writing in 1917, noted this relationship. Despite his frequent references to university influence upon the development of junior colleges in California, Lange was enough of an experienced schoolman to recognize that his state's junior colleges could not have been established had it not communities not

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" In Joliet and Goshen, completion of a major new high school facility immediately preceded the organization of full, two-year postgraduate programs. For Joliet, see Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 76. For Goshen, see Adams, "The Junior College at Goshen, Indiana," 71. In Kansas City, completion of a new high school allowed the school board to assign its old high school to the exclusive use of its junior college. This was likely the first instance in which a public junior college had its own campus. See Bainter, "The Administration and Control of Public Junior Colleges," 16. For Grand Rapids, see Jesse B. Davis, "Looking Backward and Forward After 25 Years," Junior College Journal 9, no. 8 (1939): 531. However, if unexpected growth of high school enrollments put pressure on available facilities, a junior college could find itself at risk. The Joliet school board considered a proposal from a member to suspend its postgraduate program in 1915 when the instruction of high school students required all of its 87 classrooms. Fortunately for the college, Joliet voters approved bonds to enlarge Central High, and the college was continued. See Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 82.

bonded to construct some 250 large, comprehensive high schools.[37]

But the real benefit of public sponsorship for the municipal junior college was the security afforded by a school district's "deep pockets." The taxing and bonding authority of a local school board could buffer a struggling junior college from the full consequences of those unforeseen calamities -- fire, earthquake, and economic recession -- that had closed so many nineteenth-century colleges.[38] When a 1919 fire leveled the school building that Santa Rosa Junior College shared with its sponsoring high school, local school officials simply relocated the junior college to a vacant grammar school until a bond was passed and a replacement facility built.[39] Similarly, California's great earthquake of

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[37] Alexis F. Lange, "The Junior College as an Integral Part of the State Public-School System," School Review 25, no. 7 (September 1917): 469.

[38] Even major private universities of this century could find themselves threatened by a natural disaster. In 1906, after years of costly litigation and excessive and unnecessary construction, Stanford was reduced to rubble by an earthquake. It barely survived the crisis. See Kevin Starr, Americans and the California Dream: 1850-1915 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), 310-311.

[39] Floyd P. Bailey, Santa Rosa Junior College, 1918-1957, Santa Rosa City Library, mimeograph (Santa Rosa: 1967), 9.

1933, which leveled Compton Junior College, did not bring about the closure of the school even though this calamity came in the midst of the Great Depression. The junior college continued in borrowed space until the Compton school district secured financing for a new junior college campus.[40] Also saved from closure by the availability of surplus school facilities were two of Kansas's junior colleges: Kansas City, whose original building burned down in 1934, and Chanute, which lost its only building to fire in 1936.[41]

2. A Sufficient Explanation: Parents, Their Children, and Civic Boosters

For some school historians, notably John Frye, the general demographic and economic trends we have described alone provide a sufficient explanation of the municipal junior college's rapid spread. Building on the work of Nugent, Frye has argued that urbanization shifted the basis of status in the American culture from land-based wealth to professional standing acquired through

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[40] Stephen B. Reichert, Jr., "The End of the Four-Year Junior College in California," Junior College Journal 29, no.5 (1959): 310-311.

[41] Flint, Jack M. Flint, Herr, F. Floyd and Carl L. Heinrich, The Kansas Junior College (Topeka, KS: The Kansas State Department of Public Instruction, 1968), 84.

schooling. Where Americans of an earlier era had moved steadily west in the pursuit of opportunity through farming or trade, the Americans of Nugent's so-called "metropolitan regime" of the early twentieth century sought opportunity through middle class occupations, and it was the rush to secure entrance to these occupations and the status they conferred that inspired dramatic enrollment increases in higher education. It was primarily to satisfy this unprecedented demand, Frye would have us believe, that such cities as Joliet, Scottsbluff, and Muskogee established public junior colleges.[4]

Frye's general line of argument provides a helpful first step in bringing us to an explanation of the municipal junior college's emergence to the extent that it avoids the pitfalls of associating the junior college with vague ideological "forces." At this same time, as a full and satisfactory explanation, it leaves a number of central questions unanswered. First, if Frye is correct, one would expect that the college-bound youth of early twentieth century America faced a shortage of college opportunities, with the nation's complement of some 1,000 colleges and universities being either unwilling or unable

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[4] Frye, The Vision of the Public Junior College, 79-80.

to accommodate the collegiate aspirations of the period's growing number of high school graduates, and that it was in reaction to this unmet demand that communities established junior colleges. Moreover, in keeping with Frye's basic rationale, we should expect to find the greatest concentration of junior colleges in the suburbs that were springing up around the nation's metropolitan centers as home to the nation's emerging professional class – the very group who would be most sensitive to the growing importance of educational credentials to the attainment of "suitable" employment by their children.

What we find, in reviewing the historical record is that the evidence does not support these expectations. First, the young high school graduate of the early twentieth century who was willing to leave home for college enjoyed a surfeit of choices. Indeed, without the addition of a single junior college, the era's complement of standard colleges and universities -- numbering nearly a thousand in 1900 -- could easily have enrolled every high school graduate with college aspirations well into the 1930s. While, by 1900, a few American universities enrolled more than 5,000 students, the combined undergraduate enrollment at all colleges and universities

numbered just 238,000.[47] Even if these institutions had increased their enrollments three-fold by 1930, roughly matching the percentage growth in the number of high school graduates, the average American college would have still enrolled just 750 students -- hardly a large college by modern standards.

Moreover, those who would directly associate the growth in the number of junior colleges with the concurrent increase in the number of high school graduates have simply ignored the obvious. Even as college attendance was a matter of voluntary choice on the part of individual students, so too was the decision of communities to establish a public junior college. Just as we should not presume the inevitability of any one student's decision to attend college based solely on the influence of broad demographic trends, neither should we assume that any community was predestined to take on the cost and responsibility of junior college sponsorship as a consequence of these same trends. A student's decision to matriculate was a matter of personal choice, and like all personal decisions was shaped in large measure by his or

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[47] US Department of Education, 120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait, Table 23 (Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Statistics, 1993), 75.

her family's view of education's value, of its immediate economic circumstance, and its expectations of the future. In much the same way, a municipal school district's decision to take on the responsibility of a junior college, particularly given its significant expense to taxpayers, had to advance much more than the private interests of a few high school graduates and their middle class parents, especially in a nation of literally hundreds of under-enrolled private and public colleges and universities. These graduates were free to attend virtually any college that accepted students of their gender, and if they opted to attend their state university, and were willing to work for room and board, the direct cost of their education could be nominal.

Rather than associating the emergence of the municipal junior college with broad demographic trends, this chapter will argue that these institutions grew out of a complex interplay of individual, family, and civic interests, within the context of generally favorable economic conditions. This argument will take form in response to several questions. Especially after 1910, what considerations prompted a growing number of small city parents to support the continued schooling of their children through at least the first two years of college,

and why were they willing to enroll them in the relatively new and untested junior college, particularly given the availability of well-established alternatives? Similarly, why did more than a hundred municipal school boards act to take on the additional cost of a junior college, given not only that no state mandated the establishment of a locally-funded junior college, but that the direct benefits of a junior college would flow to relatively few students, and that other progressive initiatives -- from the kindergarten to the adult school -- could make equally good use of scarce local funds? In cities from Temple, Texas, to San Mateo, California, whose interests, other than those of high school graduates unwilling to relocate for college and their parents, were served by the establishment and maintenance of a local junior college and how were these interests marshaled to prevail over other competitors for limited public funds? It is in answering these questions that we will begin to form a reasonable and sufficient explanation for the emergence of the municipal junior college.

A. Parental Interests

Goethe, through his ill-fated Werther, captured the ideal of the Continental university student. Of modest origins, Werther was an itinerant student, willing to

leave home and family and move freely among the Europe's great lecture halls in pursuit of pure learning and high culture. But the Continental pilgrim-student has never found favor with American parents or their children.[44] Even though the number of parents willing to support the further schooling of their children increased dramatically after 1900, many did not put aside traditional American parochialism, preferring that their children receive a college education near at hand, in a closely monitored, even cloistered setting -- or receive no education at all.[45] As Amos Gray asked in 1915, "Why send our boys and

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[44] Douglas Sloan provides an early example of this sentiment in a 1773 letter from Francis Alison to Yale's President Stiles. Alison attributes low enrollment at America's struggling colonial colleges to the cost of attendance and to some parents' fear of the potential threat to the proper moral development of the young scholars posed by the cities in which many of these colleges were located. See Douglas Sloan, The Scottish Enlightenment and the American College Ideal (New York: Teachers College Press, 1971), 81. We can also find evidence of similar concerns underlying the organization of America's first public high school, Boston's English Classical School, in 1821. According to Spring, Boston parents objected to sending their children to the private academies then located outside of Boston, and it was in response to these objections that the English Classical School was organized. See Joel Spring, The American School 1642-1985, (White Plains, NY: Longman, 1985), 194-195.

[45] McDowell found evidence of this reluctance in a survey of the parents of junior college students. These parents supported attendance at a junior college because more-established institutions were "too distant." See also, Brooks, "The Junior College," 19; Smolich, "Origin

girls away from home to be taught what they could secure at home just as well as in a college or university amid much that is undesired?"[46]

Parental reluctance to permit their children to leave home for a college education represents a consistent theme from the Colonial era. The same resistance to relocation observed by Stiles in the eighteenth century was still a factor at the end of the nineteenth century. And, if we are to believe Crawfurd, young people were no more willing to relocate for college than their parents were willing to see them go. It was the reticence of young people to attend the University of Washington in Seattle, and not as much the concerns of their parents, that led to the

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and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 41-42; and Dougherty, "The Politics of Community College Expansion," 211-213.

[46] Gray, "The Junior College," 92. Gray went on, in a wide ranging complaint against the materialism of his time and its infection of colleges and universities, to observe:

> One cannot study the environment and numerous activities of college or university life, without being seriously impressed with the great and constant temptations which surround young freshmen just released...from home influence. Especially is this true when the social life of most colleges and universities, in our time of so much ease, luxury, wealth and leisure, is the predominating attraction for many students; the side show becomes the circus.

Gray, "The Junior College," 92-93.

organization of Washington State's junior colleges in the second decade of this century:

> Those students who were unable to reach an established institution of higher learning were the chief reason for the establishment of junior colleges; to such students, a college beyond commuting range was no college at all.[9]

The unwillingness of Americans, parent and child, to accept relocation as an inevitable feature of the collegiate experience was well known to early twentieth century college presidents and deans, and to many it represented a major obstacle to the creation of truly national universities. For Harper, the parochialism of American students was raised to the level of a law: the "Geographical Law of Limitations."[10] Any college or university that aspired to national prominence, Harper observed, had to contend with the fact that "ninety per cent of those who attend college select for that purpose an institution within one hundred miles of home." From Koos's research, we can even estimate parochialism's

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[9] Crawfurd, "The Junior College Movement in Washington State," 67.

[10] William R. Harper, The Small College - It's Prospects, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1900), 14. In 1916, a report on higher education in Iowa prepared by the U.S. Bureau of Education regarded it as "well-recognized truth" that few colleges attract any students living more than 100 miles away. See Bureau of Education, "State Higher Educational Institutions of Iowa," 32.

influence on the decision of high school graduates to attend college. As Koos found in a study of several Midwestern cities and towns, the overall rate of college attendance in communities with a local college was nearly double that of communities without some form of proximate higher education." His findings argue that the number of high school graduates who either were kept home or chose to stay home, and not attend college, was no small minority, but very nearly equaled the number of students who chose college over home.

Based on the historical record, it appears that the parochialism of American parents was rooted in two general concerns. As one might expect, in an age of limited student aid and nominal incomes, many parents worried about their ability to meet the cost of maintaining a child at a residential college. Even in the case of a state university that charged no tuition, such as the Universities of California and Texas, parents whose children could not be assured of some form of campus employment faced the not-inconsiderable costs of travel, room, and board. During the 1920s, expenditures of $400 a year on these items was not unusual, and this assumed that

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[11] Koos, The Junior College, 134.

the student lived frugally. In 1916 the school board of Ontario, California, highlighted these costs in justifying its decision to establish Chaffey Junior College. Local parents, the board noted, would enjoy substantial savings by enrolling their children at Chaffey even though the University of California was tuition-free. Enrollment at Chaffey would free parents both of the considerable expense of a student's travel to Berkeley or Stanford some 400 miles to the town's north and the added costs of supporting a student in an urban community.

As the first chapter showed, such parental cost-consciousness, even during the relatively prosperous 1920s, was not in the least unreasonable. While nominal by current standards, at $400 the annual expense of keeping just one child in residence at a traditional college or university, excluding tuition, equaled a tenth of a physician's income and half of a day laborer's. And with the Depression, parents had even more reason to worry

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McCrea, "History of Chaffey College," 13.

Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 132. Levine's analysis is confirmed by data drawn from the 1928 edition of the Blue Book. By 1928, the minimum cost of attending a large state university was about $400 a year, or about fifteen percent of the annual income of a business proprietor, while a prestigious private college, such as Williams or Dartmouth, could easily cost twice as much.

about supporting a child away at college and many sought out less costly alternatives.

Some junior colleges can even trace their origins directly to the disruption of family finances brought about by the Great Depression. Palm Beach Junior College — Florida's first — was one such junior college.[33] By 1930, a substantial number of the city's white high school graduates who had gone on to the University of Florida or another residential college were forced by economic necessity to return to Palm Beach. With little else to do, many of these young people filled their free time by enrolling in the small number of postgraduate courses then being offered by the city's segregated high school. As was

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[32] The rapid increase in junior college enrollments after 1930 is not the only evidence of growing parental anxiety with the cost of residential college attendance. This period also saw a significant resurgence in postgraduate programs in those states, such as Indiana, that would not permit the organization of junior colleges. Postgraduate enrollments grew so dramatically during the Depression that the Bureau of Education incorporated postgraduates into their annual tabulation of school attendance. In 1931, the Office of Education identified 18,270 postgraduates. In 1935 this number peaked at 70,725, then declined steadily until 1946, when large numbers of returning veterans also chose the postgraduate option where no junior college was available. See Department of Education, 120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait, 39.

[33] Palm Beach Junior College, Community College Contact, mimeographed (Palm Beach, FL, 1984), 1.

the case in Kansas City some twenty years earlier, the Palm Beach school board had no desire to refuse admission to these young men and women, but neither did it want them fraternizing with younger high school students. The solution for Palm Beach, as it had been for Kansas City, was the creation of a junior college, which opened in 1932 as a separate institution under the jurisdiction of the city's public schools.[54]

But cost was not the only consideration that small city parents took into account as they weighed the schooling options of their children. These parents were no less concerned with the proper moral development of their children, and they apparently held serious reservations as to the commitment of universities to the moral well-being of their students. These doubts may well have had a sound basis, in part being fueled by a perception that

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[54] During the Depression, some communities were able to use funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration to underwrite the expense of a junior college. Such was the case in Baltimore and in six communities in New Jersey. New Jersey's junior colleges were governed by county boards of education under the general oversight of the State Supervisory Board of Junior Colleges. Most of New Jersey's junior colleges did not survive the termination of federal aid in 1936. One, however, was reorganized as a private college and survives to this day as Union College. See New Jersey State Supervisory Board of Junior Colleges, Junior Colleges in New Jersey Supported by the Emergency Relief Administration, (Trenton, NJ, 1935), 2-3.

university faculty were pursuing their individual scholarly interests at the expense of their traditional role of student mentor, a perception heightened by any number of well-publicized incidents of student misconduct on university campuses.[1] One can only imagine how the parents of a college-age child in Auburn, California, viewed the reaction of Stanford's students to David Starr Jordan attempt to ban alcohol from his campus. Starr's action provoked a student riot, which culminated in a draft of the university's new policy being burned by a mob of students gathered in Memorial Court.[2]

The era's university presidents were aware of these parental concerns, and sought at every turn to allay any suspicion as to the moral tone of university life and the

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[1] There were some who actually attributed the rise of the junior college directly to this change in the role of university faculty. Bessie Stolzenberg argued in the Bulletin of High Points that it was the desire of universities to fashion a curriculum "for the faculty and not for the student" that led to the emergence of the junior college. Only by the close and personal supervision of a caring faculty could the undergraduate avoid "maladjustment" and failure, and only the junior college seemed prepared to offer such guidance. Bessie Stolzenberg, "A Study of the Junior College," Bulletin of Highpoints 10, (January, 1928): 19. See also the very sympathetic treatment of Stolzenberg's complaints in "The Junior College," American Educational Digest 47 (April 1928): 360-361.

[2] Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 335.

commitment of faculty to the well being of students.[57] Among those university presidents who sought to mollify parental concerns was Chicago's William Rainey Harper. In The Small College - It's Prospects, Harper acknowledged the "great outcry" against America's universities for what some claimed was their "anti-Christian" bias.[58] But he strongly denied that any "evil and powerful" influence held sway on university campuses and took pains to reassure parents that his university's students, at least, were no strangers to prayer. No less sensitive to these concerns was the University of Wisconsin's president, Alexander Meikelejohn. Recognizing that more than words were required to lessen parental anxieties, he reorganized Wisconsin's undergraduate program by breaking his undergraduate college into smaller units with the intent

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[57] Small city parents were not the only group suspicious of state universities during the inter-war era. Labor unions also felt that state universities, in particular, were influenced by corporate interests and unwilling to serve labor's needs. This dissatisfaction led in part to the creation of several labor-sponsored schools and colleges. See Joel Spring, Education and the Rise of the Corporate State (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), 143-148.

[58] Harper, The Small College - It's Prospects, 28.

of replicating the "intimate contacts" and moral supervision found at the Old Time College.

Junior college proponents were no less aware of parental suspicions of the university's moral climate, and they were quick to capitalize on these fears. When California's Fresno school board sought to justify its 1910 decision to establish the postgraduate program that eventually developed into Fresno Junior College, it did not highlight the program's potential to promote greater access to higher education or to save parents money. Rather, the Fresno board argued that its postgraduate program was in the moral interest of the city's recent high school graduates:

> By bringing higher education to the pupils, they are given the added benefit of a continuation of their home life. The period of parental advice and guardianship is continued longer and added protection is given to the morals of the young at an age when it is not always best for them to be cast adrift in a big University environment without such protection.[59]

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[58] "The Meiklejohn Experiment," American Educational Digest 47 (September, 1926): 34.

[59] Fresno Pubic Schools, Annual Report (Fresno, CA, 1916), 39. Victor Hedgepeth, the principal of Goshen's "six year high school," noted that it was this same concern that led many Goshen parents to enroll their children in his school. See, Victor Hedgepeth, "The Six-Year High School Plan at Goshen, Ind.," School Review 13 (January 1905): 19.

Even those junior college advocates who were university faculty members questioned the ability of their own institutions to properly regulate student life. Leonard Koos, for one, acknowledged with rare candor that the unsuspecting undergraduate faced "an actual hazard, especially in institutions with large registrations and staffs inadequate to the purposes of social and moral guidance."[51] Indeed, the University of Ohio's W. W. Charters attributed the early success of the public junior college to parental apprehensions about university life. As he observed:

> Then, too, parents are anxious about the moral welfare of their immature children who in a distant institution may be perilously placed upon their own responsibility. For such parents the presence of a college in close proximity to the home again becomes a crucial factor in the decision to support children for a longer period while they prepare themselves more fully for life in college.[52]

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[51] Koos, The Junior College, 536.

[52] W. W. Charters, "Functions of the Junior College," Proceedings of the National Education Association 25 (1929): 305. Of course, proponents of the junior college were not the first to highlight the moral dangers of unregulated university life. Such sentiments were a staple of the promotional circulars of small, denominational colleges at the close of the nineteenth century. The appeal to parents found in the 1891 catalogue of Missouri's Central College was typical in this regard:

> See to it that the mother's religion, the father's faith, the sweet influences of the pious home, are not discredited by the 'philosophy, falsely so called,' of the arrogant professor. Put your son

In summary, the attraction of a proximate college for small city parents was two-fold. First, a student's attendance at a local college spared parents the expense of room, board, and transportation. But even more importantly, this option allowed parents to extend their supervision of their children into young adulthood. At a time when parents took their responsibility for the moral upbringing of their children very seriously, they found in a local junior college an attractive alternative to distant, impersonal, and threatening colleges and universities. A local junior college not only provided instruction whose total cost was generally lower than that of a residential institution, but provided that instruction free of grave moral risks."

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into the care and keeping of Christian teachers, if you value his soul.
Quoted in C. Wright Mills, Sociology and Pragmatism: The Higher Learning in America (New York: Paine-Whitman Publishers, 1964), 51.

" The record indicates that junior colleges were sensitive to the interests of parents, and so took their responsibility for the well-being of their students quite seriously. When, for example, the Texarkana, Texas, school board established a junior college in 1926, it required applicants to foreswear membership in any secret society (essentially fraternities and sororities) as a prerequisite to admission. Temple Junior College, another Texas school, arranged the enrollment of women students so that they would not be required to attend any class that ended after 5 P.M., since it was regarded as improper for women students to be on the streets of the city at such a

But a much more personal consideration may have also been at work in building local support for the municipal junior college among small city elites. The physicians, lawyers, newspaper publishers, school administrators, and ministers who sought their fortune in the era's growing small cities soon found themselves in something of a trap of their own making as their children approached college age. On the one hand, these men benefitted handsomely from the entrepreneurial opportunities afforded by life in dynamic, young communities. At the same time, in the absence of a proximate college, they had little choice but to send their children away after high school graduation, for they were well aware that a college degree was increasingly necessary if their children were to preserve their inherited social standing.[11] As one small city

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late hour. This is not to suggest that junior colleges discouraged socialization. To the contrary, as we have already noted with respect to Fort Scott and Lyons Township Junior Colleges, the extra-curricular activities of junior college students were quite rich and varied. But they were always well chaperoned.

[11] We are not suggesting that the desire to see one's children acquire a college education was limited to small city parents. As Veysey has observed, by 1900 public recognition of a degree's importance to the preservation of social status was widespread, and by 1920 it grew so widespread that George Counts would complain of parents "engaged in a mad scramble to place their children in the line of succession leading to the more favored and profitable occupations." The particular dilemma facing

editor, a strong junior college advocate, reminded parents in 1912:

> The necessity of securing a thorough education is becoming more and more apparent, if anyone hopes to successfully cope with conditions in this world as they are and are likely be for some time to come.[61]

For these small city parents, the conflict in their desire to preserve the social status of their children while keeping them free of the moral risks attendant to university life, and to balance these interests without having to abandon the extraordinary opportunities that came from residence in a growing small city, served as an especially powerful motive to secure some form of proximate higher education. We have already seen in the case of Kansas City how this class of parents influenced a school board's decision to establish a junior college, and conditions in Kansas City were in no way exceptional. Yet,

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many small city parents was the lack of proximate choices. See Laurence R. Veysey, The Emergence of the American University (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,, 1965), 266-67 and Counts, "Selection is a Function of American Secondary Education," 599.

[61] Le Grand (California) Advocate, 14 December 1912. A decade later, another California newspaper editor made essentially the same observation:

> Successful business opportunities of the day call for the boy and girl with an education; the choice being given to the one most prepared.

See Burlingame (California) Advance, June 16, 1922.

as we will show, these parents were not alone in their advocacy of a local junior colleges. They had two additional and important allies: their own children and civic boosters.

B. The Student Interest

Just as many parents were hesitant to send their children away to college, many young people reluctant to leave. Even beyond the fact that these young people shared the parochialism of their parents, those even willing to leave home for college faced changes in admissions and promotion practices by many colleges and universities after the turn of the century that rendered their prospects for earning a degree considerably more problematic than they had been just 30 years earlier.

Even as late as 1880, very few American colleges were in a position to turn away a willing applicant, academic deficiencies notwithstanding. These institutions were simply too small and tuition-dependent to hold fast to any rigid admissions standard. But by 1910, a number of the most prestigious private colleges had established highly professional admissions departments, which aimed to "shape" the composition of their institution's student body, and many large state universities simply could not accommodate all who wished to enroll. As a consequence, by

1910 neither admission nor graduation were guaranteed, with academic ability and the capacity to pay growing tuition costs increasingly determining a student's access to a higher education.

As David O. Levine has described, this transition took different forms on different campuses. Where some colleges and universities tightened their admissions practices (whether through the use of testing or personal interviews), others increased their tuition and fee schedules, and still others imposed strict retention policies upon those they did admit. America's older private colleges, following Dartmouth's lead, took the route of adopting "selective admissions" policies. Not only did this change promote a more academic and exclusive campus culture, but it permitted these colleges to systematically raise their tuition and fees. By deliberately turning the economics of admission to their favor — essentially creating a demand that they could not possibly meet -- Dartmouth, Yale, and an emerging college and university elite were at last free to become academically selective even as they improved their bottom

line -- two goals that had eluded the nineteenth century college."

State universities were, as a rule, proscribed by law from adopting selective admissions policies -- despite the desire of many university presidents and deans to mimic the increasingly exclusive and scholarly campus climate of their private college counterparts. But state university administrators were quick to adopt a stratagem that allowed them to circumvent any legal constraints on their control of the composition of the student body. Nominally satisfying legal requirements, such flagship state universities as Minnesota and Missouri continued to admit all eligible applicants. However, they then simply weeded out a large percentage of their underclassmen through the imposition of Draconian promotion policies. As one early junior college catalogue aptly described the situation at

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" No "invisible hand" was at play in Dartmouth's decision to create a campus climate of exclusivity, its decision being quite calculated and self-interested. Nor did this decision go unrecognized by contemporaries, whose opinion was quite divided. When Yale finally followed Dartmouth's lead in 1928, critics argued that the effect of this action would be to foster "intellectual and social snobbery," while its supporters, like the editors of The Washington Post, saw it as an inevitable result of the fact that not all who wished a university education were equal to the challenge. See "Problems in Higher Education," American Educational Digest 47, (1928): 34.

state universities, the freshmen year had become "the educational cemetery for many."[1]

High school graduates of the early twentieth century did, of course, have a third college option: the small, nondescript denominational college. These schools, like the nine scattered across Oregon's Willamette Valley or the ten strung along the northern tier of Missouri, would seem to have had every reason to welcome additional students and the tuition they would bring. For such colleges as Nebraska's Grand Island, Texas's Blinn, and Ohio's Marietta, a growing number of high school graduates offered them an unprecedented opportunity to eliminate their preparatory and academic departments, increase tuition revenues, and fill dormitory beds.

Yet just as the possibility of better times presented itself, America's small colleges increasingly found themselves under sharp attack from a chorus of university presidents and federal officials. Harper and Ross, among others, criticized these colleges for inefficiencies of operation and deficiencies of curriculum, while the Bureau of Education's first specialist for higher education, K. C. Babcock, went so far as to question the preparatory

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[1] Fort Scott Junior College, Circular of Information (Fort Scott, KS: 1921), 4.

value of their degrees for graduate study, a position that likely cost him his position.[" Some even sought the outright closure of these colleges in the name of efficiency. Such was clearly the design U.S. Commissioner of Education, Philander P. Claxton, and Babcock's successor as the Bureau's higher education specialist, George Zook. In Bureau studies of Oregon and Arkansas completed by Zook, both states were criticized for an overabundance of small, denominational colleges. In the case of Arkansas, Zook not only recommended that graduates of the state's small colleges not receive the coveted high school teaching credential (thereby severely reducing the occupational value of their degrees), he went so far as to recommend a substantial reduction in the number of these colleges through merger or closure:

> [C]onsider the subject of collegiate instruction in Arkansas with a view to such reorganization of the institutions they support in the State as to

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" In 1911, Babcock ranked American colleges and universities based on his assessment of the value of their baccalaureates as a preparation for graduate study. The actual classification report, circulated before its official publication date, produced an immediate uproar among college and university presidents whose degrees were not included among Babcock's first class. President Taft sequestered the publication, and it was never published by the Bureau, but it apparently circulated informally among university registrars and it was used by at least one university -- the University of California -- to evaluate applicants for graduate programs.

> eliminate unnecessary and expensive duplication, which results in inferior collegiate instruction.[*]

Although the arguments of Harper, Claxton, and Zook did not always prevail (none of Oregon's nine private colleges closed as a result of Zook's report), students and their parents could not ignore the threat to these institutions. The national trend was clearly in the direction of fewer colleges and universities, a trend born out by the Bureau's annual surveys. Exclusive of junior colleges, the number of American colleges and universities actually declined from 977 in 1900 to 951 by 1910, and would not grow significantly in subsequent decades. The student who enrolled in a small college in the first decades of this century risked possible disruption in his studies, either through the college's conversion into a junior college, a merger, or even outright closure.

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[*] George F. Zook, Report on the Higher Educational Institutions of Arkansas, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, no. 7 (Washington, DC, 1922), 8-9. The study was requested by the Arkansas legislature. Arkansas was in the process of developing comprehensive public high schools and it was the legislature's wish that only baccalaureate holders would teach in these schools. This necessitated some method of accrediting the state's colleges and Zook's study was intended to outline the standards that the state would adopt for this purpose.

[*] The Depression made the difficult situation of small colleges even worse. The student who enrolled in Nebraska's Grand Island College in 1931 would have found

Moreover, if the student aspired to graduate study, he could expect to face additional requirements imposed by increasingly selective graduate schools, or he might discover that his degree did not qualify him for a high school teaching credential.

In summary, American high school graduates of the early twentieth century found their path to the baccalaureate increasingly difficult and uncertain. Men were no longer assured of acceptance by the prestigious Eastern colleges, while all students were discouraged from attending their state university by the very real prospect of summary dismissal and the "distinct taint of failure." Even denominational colleges became less

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himself relocated to Sioux Falls College in 1932. Similarly, a student who enrolled in the Methodist Blinn Memorial College in 1927 would have been a student of Southwest University in 1929, only to have graduated from the a re-organized, nondenominational Blinn Memorial College in 1930.

The instability of denominational colleges was especially acute in Missouri. There, encouraged by H. Ross Hill, Harper's notion that small and poorly endowed denominational colleges recreate themselves as two-year colleges had its only real success. After 1910, Stephens, Hardin and several other colleges abandoned their upper divisions to concentrate on academy and junior college work. An exceptionally thorough and unbiased description of these developments in Missouri can be found in Brooks, "The Junior College," 27-35.

"Again the Junior College," American Educational Digest 47 (1928): 552. Local junior college advocates were

inviting. As we have noted, the student attended a small, out-of-the-way Baptist or Methodist college faced the very real possibility that the school might become a junior college, that its degree would not be recognized for purposes of obtaining a teaching credential, or that it might simply close. Some students were willing to take these risks, but others were naturally hesitant. And it was this second group -- students unwilling to chance rejection by an Ivy League college, fearful of dismissal by their state university, or unwilling to travel any great distance to attend a college with an uncertain future -- that formed a natural and growing market for the public junior college, with its guaranteed admission for those with adequate preparation, minimal risk of failure, and proximity to home.[73]

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not adverse to playing to these concerns. Burlington Junior College's first catalogue made a point of reminding parents and students of the very real possibility of summary dismissal from one of Iowa's state universities. The high failure rate for freshmen proved costly to parents and students alike, the catalogue argued, and the elimination of this risk was one of the chief advantages of a junior college education. See Some Items in the History of Burlington Junior College: 1920-1970, mimeograph, n.d., 5. This manuscript cites as its sources page 38 of the Burlington Junior College Catalogue for 1925.

[73] Among the junior college's national proponents, the rather brutal "elimination" policies of the era's state universities formed the basis of a fairly common

C. Civic Boosters and the Public Junior College

The desire of many small city parents and their children to have the option of a proximate college explains, at least in part, the enthusiasm with which the early junior college was received. But even in relatively prosperous municipalities, high school graduates never represented more than a small minority of all youth at any point before 1940, and it seems unlikely that their parents, however prominent, could have single-handedly secured public sponsorship of a junior college over the objections of the parsimonious and in the face of competition from other, equally worthy causes. Who, then, were the allies of these parents and graduates? Which factions, among the many that made up the polity of the emerging small city of the early twentieth century, found common cause in sponsorship of a local college? Can we discern their motives, the depth of their commitment, and what sustained their support for a junior college as local conditions inevitably changed?

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argument on behalf of the local junior college. Lange went so far as to argue in all apparent candor that the diversion of students to local junior colleges, and away from the state university, was in their own interest. These students avoided the very real possibility of academic failure and summary dismissal, a stigma that would follow them thereafter.

The small city that pursued the goal of regional prominence in early twentieth century America did so with no assurance of success, for its competitors were many and no less committed to the same objective. The intense rivalry among this era's aspiring communities for new residents, investment, and institutions was not unprecedented, recalling in almost every detail the competition among the towns and villages of antebellum New York and Ohio.[74] But twentieth century city-builders brought a level of sophistication to the task unknown to their predecessors. The emerging municipality of the early twentieth century pursued its interests through a conscious, purposeful program of self-promotion, known to contemporaries as *boosterism*. While enthusiasm was the

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[74] If one accepts Harry Scheiber's description of urban rivalry in the early nineteenth century, there are also some significant differences between the two eras. During the early nineteenth century, such towns as Dayton and Chillicothe in Ohio sought to enhance their competitive advantage through benefits obtained from a state legislature, e.g. a college charter, a prison, or state-funded road or canal access. In the early twentieth century, competing small cities preferred to act on their own initiative, securing desired civic improvements through local taxation (the funding source of comprehensive high schools and most junior colleges) or by granting an entrepreneur the exclusive right to provide a needed service (such as water, utilities, or a street car line.) See Harry N. Scheiber, "Urban Rivalry and Internal Improvements in the Old Northwest, 1820-1860," in A History of Urban America (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc., 1976), 126-127.

defining emotional quality of this era's boosters, they were equally calculating in their use of advances in urban planning, mass marketing, and transportation -- from improved rail service to macadamization -- to achieve their goal of civic growth.

Civic leaders in such aspiring twentieth century communities as San Mateo, California, and Temple, Texas, learned the basics of city building From their nineteenth century counterparts in Chicago, Buffalo, and Toledo. They first set about to create a civic infrastructure. This included securing adequate water rights, installing sewers, forming fire brigades, the macadamization of main streets, setting aside land for public parks, gaining direct access to state highways and rail lines, and pursuing designation as a county seat. If all went well, and the sale of new homes and commercial sites proved promising, a period of institution-building followed as these civic boosters set out to replicate the essential ornaments of urban life: churches, a comprehensive high school, newspapers, a public library, a commercial main street, a courthouse, and a hospital. But more than anything, boosters desired a "home town" college. As

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That this era's civic boosters consciously equated modern schools and city parks with progress is revealed in

Blake McKelvey described community sentiment early in this century:

> Almost every self-respecting community now required a temple of higher learning, and where private philanthropy failed to meet the need, demands for public action increased.[76]

As progressive men and women of the early twentieth century, civic boosters knew full well that their aspirations would best be achieved through careful, deliberate planning. They recognized that they could not rely upon accident, individual whim, or speculative frenzy to bring about the organization of a library or the building of a modern high school. Moreover, they accepted the need for such planning to be part of a collective effort, involving all of a community's "leading men" and

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a brief, fictional, dialogue which appeared in an newspaper article intended to solidify the support of Burlingame, California's commuter residents for a bond to build an expensive new high school and purchase a 10-acre city park:

> "Conductor, Oh Conductor. What place is this?"
>
> "Why, this is Burlingame."
>
> "Burlingame? What a splendid name for a city. And such a beautiful school, and what wonderful playgrounds. My, my, it must be a most progressive city."

Burlingame (California) Advance, March 24, 1922.

[76] Blake McKelvey, The Urbanization of America: 1860-1915 (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 272.

their wives, aided, as appropriate, by the new breed of city planners and architects. One can find an early example of this combination of deliberate planning, collective effort, and professional guidance in the transformation of San Diego from "a shabby provincial town" into a city of spacious streets, large plazas, and a unique Mediterranean style.

At the same time, our civic booster also knew that his aspirations carried considerable risk, and that any civic improvement entailed immediate costs that not all residents would willingly support. Even before he could approach a Midwestern farmer or St. Louis merchant to relocate to his new community in Texas or California, the civic booster had to gain the backing of his fellow residents to bear the cost of infrastructure improvements and institution-building. Such support was never assured. However, our booster could look with hope to the example of such small cities as Burlingame, California, where

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[redacted] John Nolen and Bertram Goodhue's recreation of San Diego provided a blueprint for civic development that other California cities, in particular, emulated. As with San Diego, a large and modern central high school was invariably part of any civic development plan, and many of the high schools that grew out of these plans -- including San Diego's -- would eventually provide a junior college with its first home. For a discussion of San Diego's development and its impact on other Californian cities, see Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 401-413.

disciplined and purposeful civic development, implemented over several decades, had overcome all local resistance to the creation of the ideal city:

> Civic pride in Burlingame has regularly promoted community improvements. In 1908, Burlingame Avenue was macadamized from the station to Primrose Road. From the beginning, pavement and sidewalks have kept pace with growth, and today it is said that every street in the city is paved. In 1914 the city hall was built. Fire protection was handled by volunteer companies until 1929 when a new firehouse was built....The present beautiful library building was authorized by a bond election in 1930. Religious worship was begun by groups of various faiths when the town was very young, and now the city prides itself in the possession of eight attractive church buildings and another about to be constructed. A newspaper, the Burlingame Advance, was begun as a weekly in 1905 and since 1926 has been a daily publication.[*]

A junior college, while not typically among the first institutions established by a community with metropolitan aspirations, was nevertheless a valued prize. We have already seen how a local junior college could serve the

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[*] Frank D. Stranger, History of San Mateo County (San Mateo, CA: The San Mateo Times 1928), 179. Stranger's history is a true classic of its genre. The author described each of the small cities and towns that made up San Mateo county in the most favorable of lights. Each offered a commodious life, every modern convenience, and an ideal climate. This work was clearly intended to encourage the "best" kind of Easterner to choose San Mateo county over San Francisco, Los Angeles, or San Diego. In comparing San Mateo to San Francisco, Stranger made a point of boasting that San Mateo had a junior college, while San Francisco did not.

interests of certain families, but it offered even greater benefits to local merchants and other civic boosters. At the most basic level, the civic booster recognized that a junior college simply made good business sense. Indeed, while Koos, Zook, and Eells may have emphasized the junior college's role in helping to rationalize the nation's system of higher education, boosters highlighted its immediate economic benefits -- both public and private -- for the community wise enough to establish one.

The typical economic argument had two dimensions. A junior college, or so this argument was generally advanced, not only alleviated a significant drain on local cash (because it reduced the number of young people forced to leave town for college), but also drew students -- and their cash -- to the city from outlying communities.[1]

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[1] Among the first to argue in favor of the junior college through a rather rudimentary form of cost-benefit analysis was Amos Gray:

> The financial saving to a community having a junior college is no insignificant item. Assuming that the expense of the average student is $500 annually, many towns will keep at home from $10,000 to $80,000 per year. The Los Angeles High School enrolls, at present, over 200 students. On the basis of $500 per student who goes from home to college, this city is keeping in the homes of the young people more than $100,000 every year, assuming that every one of the 200 students goes to college elsewhere.

See Gray, "The Junior College," 93-94.

Civic boosters saw these "out-of-district" students as especially attractive. These students often lived in town during the school week, bringing substantial new business to local boarding houses and main street.[80] As F. H. Boren, dean of California's College of San Mateo, calculated in 1928, the average out-of-district student contributed $940 yearly to San Mateo's local economy.[81] Second, in all states except California and Texas, junior colleges were free to impose substantial tuition surcharges on out-of-district students. These surcharges, often set at two or even three times the local tuition

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[80] Some junior colleges, notably in Texas, Mississippi, and California, even maintained dormitories. Because room and board could be more than three times tuition charges, dormitories represented a major revenue source for a junior college and its sponsoring community. For a brief discussion of the 16-bed dormitory at California's Bakersfield Junior College, see "Bakersfield Dormitory," Junior College Journal 9, no. 3(1938): 144-145.

[81] F. H. Boren, "The Junior College: A Community Asset," Teacher's Journal of Northern California 3, no.4 (1928): 32. That Boren's calculations might have been a bit overstated is suggested by the findings of a study undertaken by California's Stockton Junior College in 1938. This study of both resident and non-resident students found that the typical out-of-district student spent between $468 and $511 a year in Stockton, as compared to $283-$313 for in-district students. While less than the figure estimated by Boren, $511 a year was still a considerable benefit to a relatively small city in 1938. See "Student Expenditures," Junior College Journal 9, no. 5, (1939): 264.

charge, effectively allowed school districts to shift some of a junior college's direct costs from the tax rolls to the out-of-district student.

However, as the more far-sighted civic booster recognized, the real value of a junior college rested in its use as an inducement to potential residents. Few institutions better demonstrated a community's commitment to progress and culture than a college. Indeed, the signaling value of a junior college was so great that the civic leaders of Le Grand, California, advertised the opening of their junior college in September 1913 -- a full year before the city's high school awarded its first diploma. Motivated by much the same desire to influence external perceptions of their community, civic boosters in Kilgore, Texas, opened their junior college just three years after the state had placed the city under marshal law in an attempt to control an oil-boom frenzy.[54]

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[54] The discovery of oil in Kilgore in 1931 turned a small, isolated Texas community into a boom town that very nearly dissolved into chaos. But civic leaders, many long-time residents of the city, moved quickly to transform a town of oil rigs, mud streets, and lawlessness into "one of the finest cities in the nation." With a remarkable effectiveness, they essentially copied the steps taken by such communities as Burlingame, California, in pursuit of this goal, and did so in the span of just five years. Support for a junior college developed in 1935 as a means to "increase property values, result in home building, and promote enterprises of a permanent nature." See Dorothy B.

Among community boosters, local merchants were especially supportive of a junior college because they best understood its signaling value. A local college, they realized, would enhance a community's image among the most well-schooled and affluent of potential residents. As part of a broader effort to attract such residents, merchants proved particularly willing to contribute the land, subventions, and tuition guarantees that school boards frequently demanded in exchange for their assuming governance responsibility of a new junior college.[83]

Bolt and Bonnie M. During, A History of Kilgore College: 1935 - 1981 (Kilgore, TX: Kilgore College Press, 1981), 34-40. However, this is not meant to suggest that all civic boosters were as aggressive as those in Kilgore. Others took a much more deliberate approach. The Atchison, Kansas, Chamber of Commerce first commissioned the University of Kansas's Bureau of School Service to determine if its city's school system could sustain a junior college. By all indications, the evaluation was thorough and the bureau strongly recommended that a junior college not be established unless the city were certain that it could draw sufficient out-of-district students to guarantee the junior college's efficient operation. See "The Expansion of the High School," School Review 32 (March 1924): 172.

[83] The use of subventions and similar inducements by local college boosters is a well-established American tradition. Had New Brunswick agreed to commit £1,000, ten acres for a campus, and another 200 forested acres for firewood, it might have secured the College of New Jersey. However, only the town of Princeton would meet these requirements, and so it became home to New Jersey's first college. See Peter A. Sammartino, A History of Higher Education in New Jersey (New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1978).

The founding of Texas's Tyler Junior College illustrates the decisive role a strongly motivated business community could play in swaying a reluctant school board. In 1926, Tyler's Chamber of Commerce proposed that the city follow the lead of El Paso, Temple, and Texarkana by establishing a public junior college under the control of the city's school board. But the board balked at the proposal. Quite reasonably, board members worried that the costs attendant to a junior college might impose an unacceptable burden on local taxpayers, particularly should its tuition income fall short of the Chamber's optimistic projections.

To assuage the board's concerns, Tyler's merchants organized a public subscription on behalf of the proposed college. In just two weeks of canvassing, the Chamber not only raised $6,500 for library books and laboratory equipment, it also secured pledges of $60,000 as a guarantee against any shortfall in future tuition revenue.[84] These inducements proved sufficient to

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[84] "Tyler Junior College," Junior College Journal 1, no. 7 (1931): 447. Such private support of local junior college was the rule, not the exception. In 1928, for example, a group of "public-spirited men and women" in Yakima, Washington, not only contributed $3000 to defray the costs of organizing their city's small, quasi-public junior college, but underwrote the college's expenses during the college's first year of operation. See W.R.

ameliorate the school board's initial concerns, which formally established Tyler Junior College in the summer of 1926.

As was noted in the first chapter, national advocates of the junior college frequently asserted that the interest of civic boosters in the junior college sprang from little more than a crass self-interest.[1] While

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Glenn and Harold A. Hoeglund, A Short History of The Yakima Valley Junior College, n.p., Yakima, WA, mimeograph, 1956.

[1] Although Chambers of Commerce were the voluntary associations through which a small city's boosters most often marshaled support for a junior college, other groups could take on this role. In Santa Rosa, California, the city's Federated Home and School Association (whose members were drawn from Santa Rosa's "leading" families) provided this leadership, while in Okema, Oklahoma, junior college boosters channeled their efforts through the local Kiwanis Club. Much as in Tyler, Okemah's school board refused to endorse a junior college until the club secured sufficient subscriptions from local merchants to meet any expenses not covered by the new junior college's $80 tuition.

[2] More recently, Kevin Dougherty has argued that the interest of small-city professionals and entrepreneurs in the junior college was far less influential than the desire of school superintendents for added prestige. Dougherty asserted that a "potent" force behind the founding of many of Washington state's early junior colleges was the 'local educators' desire for organizational and professional aggrandizement." This statement is difficult to justify given the absence of any supporting documentation and in light of the substantial evidence from other states that most school officials played a secondary role in the decision to establish a junior college. In those rare instances where a school superintendent led the call for a junior college, the

there is no question that the local merchants of Tyler, like those in Fresno, Joliet, and San Mateo, expected that a junior college would promote their economic interests, does this fact justify the rather extreme cynicism of Gray, Koos, and Eells? Might local enthusiasm for a proposed junior college have a more complex explanation, and one not laid entirely at the feet of self-interest?

When the historical record is approached with an open mind, small city boosters of this era are found to have been men and women of broad vision and great energy, with the resourcefulness to translate civic aspirations into paved streets, progressive school systems, and vibrant business communities. Moreover, they clearly saw no conflict in furthering their private economic interests through the aggressive promotion of publicly-funded civic improvements, if these improvement also advanced the general public good.

Exemplifying this era's small city booster was Charles Kirkbride of San Mateo, California. Arriving in San Mateo toward the end of the nineteenth century, this native of Scotland quickly established a reputation as

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junior college soon closed. Examples of such failures include the junior colleges at Goshen and Newark and the two in Baltimore. See Dougherty. "The Politics of Community College Expansion," 212.

"one of the sterling citizens and representative professional men" of his community.[87] Kirkbride not only launched San Mateo's first general-circulation newspaper, he also took the lead in securing a public library and organized San Mateo's first building and loan association, after which he served for many years as San Mateo's city attorney.[88] But local historians have reserved special praise for Kirkbride's advocacy of public education. In 1911 he lead the campaign that resulted in the organization of a union high school district encompassing San Mateo and its adjacent communities of Burlingame, Hillsborough, and San Bruno, and then secured voter approval of two major bond issues to construct large, modern high schools.[89]

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[87] Roy W. Cloud, History of San Mateo County (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Co, 1925), 32.

[88] Kirkbride was willing to put his own money on the line in the interest of civic betterment. On his own initiative, Kirkbride pledged $500 as a personal bond to secure the large collection of San Francisco's Knights of Pythias to serve as the basis for a public library for San Mateo. Shortly thereafter he joined with J.H. Hatch in pledging $625 toward a site for a public library to house the Knights of Pythias's collection. Eventually, both Kirkbride and Hatch were reimbursed by San Mateo. See Philip Alexander and Charles Hamm, History of San Mateo County (Burlingame, CA: n.p., 1916), 134.

[89] Civic affairs were not Kirkbride's sole interest. At the turn of the century, he sold the San Mateo Times and left the city to earn a law degree at Chicago's

Possibly Kirkbride's most notable accomplishment was his successful campaign to establish San Mateo Junior College in 1922. In what proved to be an unexpectedly contentious referendum, pitting San Mateo's voters against those of Burlingame and the other, smaller communities within San Mateo's unified high school district, Kirkbride succeeded in winning over a substantial majority of voters to the cause of the junior college.[*]

Of course, it would be naive to believe that Kirkbride's advocacy of civic progress was motivated by pure altruism. Kirkbride was also a major developer of commercial property in San Mateo and its surrounding towns, so that he benefitted directly from the civic improvements he advocated in his capacity as newspaper publisher, city attorney, and school board member. But it would be as unfair, following Lange, to coldly dismiss such advocacy as crass opportunism and self-dealing. Kirkbride, like other civic boosters of this time was no one-dimensional figure motivated solely by a narrow self-

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Northwestern University. Kirkbride then returned to San Mateo, where he not only established a successful law practice, but rose to prominence in San Francisco's prestigious Commonwealth Club, was a leading figure in the local Presbyterian church, and raised a family.

[*] Cloud, History of San Mateo County, 30-32.

interest. He, like other boosters of this time, saw that apart from any personal gain, civic growth provided the only avenue toward a community's realization of a well-ordered life, at once free of big-city "sins," yet blessed by every urban advantage. In this sense, the boosters' goal was not simply to imitate, on a more modest scale, America's great cities. Their vision was much bolder -- to create cities of a new order, at once "a protected and better place."[1] Their communities would recapitulate the pure democracy of the New England village, but would also offer residents paved roads, sewers, good schools, the absence of the many urban "sins" and even a measure of culture.[2]

Yet vision does not always inspire action. What imparted an extraordinary urgency and effectiveness to the vision of civic boosters was the conviction that the

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[1] Arthur Vidich and Joseph Bensman, Small Town in Mass Society (Princeton: Princeton University Press,, 1968), 30.

[2] Civic leaders who advocated for a junior college were often the same people who earlier organized to expunge "sin" from their communities. In Scottsbluff, for example, the Women's Club -- almost always a strong supporter of educational progress -- had been organized by the "leading" wives of the city in 1903 for the purpose of ridding their city of saloons. By 1907, Scottsbluff was dry. One this goal was met, Scottsbluff's Women's Club was free to turn its attention to educational reform.

overriding goal of their efforts -- the creation of a truly "better place" -- was in no way foreordained. Reflecting the idealism of their contemporary, the philosopher Joshiah Royce, small city boosters saw all progress as the result of conscious and voluntary acts, subject to the uncertainties and risks associated with all human undertakings.[33] From this perspective, a city's attainment of metropolitan status depended entirely upon the willingness of residents to act with common purpose for the collective good, and to act sooner rather than later. The remarkable energy that Kirkbride and others of his generation expended on behalf of civic improvement -- not just in creating junior colleges, but in organizing libraries, hospitals, churches, and parks -- did not spring from some "great surge of social reform," as suggested by Ratcliff.[34] Rather, this energy flowed from their conviction that the attainment of growth and prosperity rested squarely in a community's own hands, and that it fell to each community to aggressively marshal the resources required to secure its future. As one small-town

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[33] Starr, Americans and the California Dream, 153

[34] James Ratcliff, "'First' Public Junior Colleges in an Age of Reform," Journal of Higher Education 58, no. 2 (1987): 151.

editor observed, in calling upon his fellow residents to "boost" for a junior college:

> We don't get good things by passively waiting and hoping they will come in their own good time.[45]

3. Was the Junior College a Small City's Preferred Choice?

From numerous examples -- Tyler, Texas, San Mateo, California, and Joliet, Illinois, -- boosterism has shown itself to have been a condition necessary to the emergence of the municipal junior college. At the same time, we should recall the equally important role played by parents and other interests in the decisions that led to junior college sponsorship. As one Kansas junior college dean candidly observed in 1922, "It takes more than vaulting ambition to maintain these institutions."[46] No one

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[45] Le Grand Advocate, 14 December 1912. Thies described much the same sentiment among the early civic boosters of Scottsbluff when she observed:

> They just went ahead and did things. Reduced to its simplest terms, that is the formula which made Scottsbluff the state's western metropolis in less than a man's life span.

See Thies, Scottsbluff's Social Development, 67.

[46] Donald Tewksbury noted boosterism's limits in his history of nineteenth century college foundings. He argued that many small colleges, established as spurs to civic development, eventually failed for want of students and public support. Even if Colin Burke's critique of the methodology is valid, Tewksbury's evidence may actually strengthen the argument that boosterism could not, on its

interest was sufficiently powerful to marshal the resources essential to the founding and continued success of a junior college. Rather, it was through the alliance of conservative parents and their children with progressive civic associations, merchants, and other proponents of civic growth that translated early and tentative experiments with postgraduate courses into comprehensive, free-standing junior colleges. Like other complex social institutions, the public junior college did not spring from any single, explicit cause, and it succeeded to the extent that it provided a diverse array

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own, serve as the sufficient condition of college development. Burke appears to agree that many civic leaders in nineteenth century small towns wished to establish colleges (to the extent of securing state charters) but could not marshal the resources to begin instruction.

In the early twentieth century, there are more than enough examples of failed junior colleges to suggest that boosterism alone could not sustain a junior college that lacked broad public support. But an overall survival rate of more than seventy-five percent for these colleges -- despite many of the same crises faced by colleges a century before -- indicates that the terms under which most junior colleges were organized and funded better protected them from the unforeseen and unfortunate consequences that had victimized earlier colleges. See Tewksbury, Founding of Colleges and Universities Before the Civil War, 25-26, and Colin Burke, American Collegiate Populations: A Test of the Traditional View, (New York: New York University Press, 1982), 11-35.

of interests with the means to achieve their respective ends.

At the same time, while the formation of local alliances of diverse and independent interests on behalf of junior colleges goes far to explain this institution's widespread replication after 1910, this line of thinking leaves one important question unanswered: If these alliances were so powerful and effective, why did communities chose to sponsor the junior college in lieu of a more prestigious form of higher education? Claxton and the other efficiency advocates of the Office of Education notwithstanding, new denominational colleges were still being organized in some small cities, although in diminished numbers, as we have noted in the case of Goshen, Indiana. An aspiring community might also follow the lead of Wichita, Kansas, and organize a municipal university on the foundation of a failed private college. What was it about the junior college that recommended it, above other options, to more than 100 growing municipalities? Did it offer advantages that denominational colleges or branch campuses of state universities could not? Was it, among a range of possibilities, the first choice of civic boosters, school

boards, and families, or was it simply the pragmatic option?

The ebb and flow of public support for public junior colleges in the Los Angeles School District should prove instructive on this point. In 1922, when the University of California opened its Los Angeles branch, the Los Angeles school district immediately closed its three junior colleges. Also in California, Eureka Junior College, organized in 1912, survived until the 1927 founding of Humboldt State Teachers College in nearby Arcata. As William Proctor observed, Eureka's junior college had "very little reason for existence" given the availability of a proximate and more prestigious alternative that, not coincidentally, was funded entirely from state sources.[1]

But, as most small cities quickly discovered, the good fortune of Los Angeles and Eureka in securing a standard college was the exception. By 1910, the main religious denominations were no longer enthusiastic sponsors of new colleges, even as population growth brought forth entire new cities in California, Texas, Oklahoma, Washington, and Arizona. Indeed, as we have already observed, these denominations found themselves

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[1] Proctor, The Junior College: Its Organization and Administration, 4

under increasing pressure from federal education officials to consolidate their colleges, rather than seed yet another generation of small and inefficient colleges throughout the developing parts of the South and West. Increasingly, as McDowell predicted, communities would be forced to turn to the junior college as the Christian faiths came to recognize the "folly and danger" of enlarging their college networks.[39]

Other options once open to the aspiring municipality also became less realistic during this period. Proprietary normal schools, like those that had operated in Fort Scott, Kansas, and Auburn, California, found it increasingly difficult to survive as state governments moved to monopolize the training of public school

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[39] F. M. McDowell, "The Junior Colleges," 98-99. Some denominational colleges were not above attempting to exploit this situation. In 1904 the German Methodist Blinn Memorial College in Bentham, Texas, decided that it wanted a new and much larger campus to accommodate growing enrollment. Rather than adding to its existing campus, it requested bids from three cities -- Waco, Seguin, and Bentham -- for a grant of land and a subvention to provide for suitable buildings. While Waco showed little interest, the bidding between Seguin and Bentham became heated, with Sequin offering ten acres and $18,000 for facilities in the hope of luring the school away from Bentham. Bentham's Chamber of Commerce answered with an offer of six acres adjacent to the college's existing campus and $2,000 for additional construction. By a slim majority, the Blinn college board accepted Bentham's bid. See Charles Schmidt, History of Blinn College (Fort Worth, TX: University Supply and Equipment Company, 1958), 27.

teachers. Neither could a city realistically hope to secure a state normal college or branch campus of the state university. State governments, faced with the combined cost of transforming their flagship universities into centers of advanced learning and the expansion of their existing normal schools, showed little enthusiasm for dissipating scarce resources by adding to their existing network of institutions."

Facing such limited options, small cities and their pragmatic boosters, school boards, and parents turned to the public junior college out of necessity. They were not drawn by any ideological consideration -- "democratization" was not part of the parochial lexicon -- but by the fact that this new institution would serve their interests, whether by keeping young people away from university temptations, by bringing new business to main street, or by drawing "better" residents to the community,

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" Yakima, Washington, was another small city to lose out in the political tug-of-war for a state college. A growing community of nearly 20,000 in 1928, Yakima had long harbored hopes of winning the state's agricultural college, a normal school or, if these options failed, a denominational college. Unfortunately for Yakima and its boosters, the agricultural college went to Pullman, the normal went to Ellensburg, and the "rumors that one church group or another might be persuaded" to build a college in this city all proved false. With no other viable option on the horizon, Yakima opened its junior college in 1928. See Helland, Our Valley, 131.

without requiring external approval or endorsement of their sponsorship decision.

No example better demonstrates the underlying pragmatism that led small cities to the public junior college than the founding of the junior college in Temple, Texas.[199] Located some 40 miles south of Dallas and supporting a population of nearly 15,000 in 1925, the city of Temple was much like the other municipalities then planning to add a college to their complement of civic institutions. As in San Mateo, Scottsbluff, and Tyler, civic and business leaders were at the forefront of this effort, channeling their energies through the local Chamber of Commerce. The historical record makes it clear that Temple's Chamber did not initially even consider establishing a public junior college. Rather, its first hope was to secure the most traditional form of American higher education: a denominational college. In 1924, upon learning that the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church was planning to open a college in Texas, representatives from Temple's Chamber of Commerce offered some 20 acres of

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[199] This discussion of Temple Junior College's origins draws extensively on Harry Clyde Farrell, Jr., "Temple Junior College Its Founding, Growth, and Development, 1926-1964" (Ed.D. diss, Colorado State College, 1964).

land and a subvention of $20,000 as an inducement to the college's organizers. Not surprisingly, the Missouri Synod chose instead to locate its new college in the far larger and more prosperous city of Dallas.

Rebuffed but undaunted, the Chamber next turned to the University of Texas, which in 1925 had taken the unprecedented step of opening a two-year branch campus at San Antonio. The Temple Chamber quickly sought its own branch. Within a year, it had successfully negotiated an agreement under the terms of which the university would establish a lower-division branch in Temple, employ the necessary faculty, and provide appropriate supervision. For its part, Temple's Chamber agreed to fully underwrite all costs associated with the venture. Unfortunately for Temple, both this agreement and the university's arrangement with San Antonio were soon nullified by the Texas attorney general, who ruled any branch campus of the university to be unconstitutional.[100]

Only when its more prestigious options had been closed off did Temple's Chamber consider the option of a public junior college. Initially Temple's school board

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[100] In correspondence with the author, the Office of the Texas Attorney General has indicated that a copy of this opinion could not be located.

balked at the idea, worried that a junior college might have an adverse impact on the district's school tax rate. Only after the Chamber offered the school board essentially the same financial package it had guaranteed the university did the school board authorize the organization of a junior college under its general jurisdiction. The Chamber, true to its word, immediately secured a subvention of $5,000 from local businesses and parents, which was used to improve the library and laboratories of the city's high school. It then secured an additional $20,000 in pledges as a guarantee against a tuition shortfall during the college's first two years of operation. With the subvention in hand, and sufficient pledges to mitigate any risk to the school system's finances, the Temple school board named a college president to oversee the admission of the first college class in late 1926.

The decision to open a junior college in Temple was occasioned by very little public debate, and what public discussion there was reflected little in the way of egalitarian sentiment. Temple's civic leaders, through the Chamber, recognized that a college, much like a library, a hospital, and a courthouse, was essential to their city's claim to regional leadership. In pursuit of this goal,

civic leaders also reflected the preferences of their time, first seeking a "real" college before turning to the state university in the hope of negotiating a branch campus. Only when these efforts had failed did they consider a local junior college. In the end, it was not ideology but pragmatism that carried the day. Temple established a public junior college because it was its best available option at a time of limited choices.

Temple's circumstance was not all unusual. Small city leaders of the early twentieth century recognized the limits of their position and their resources. Their communities lacked the wealth of an Atlanta or Dallas, and so had no hope of acquiring an Emory or Southern Methodist, just as they lacked the political power to secure a state university branch campus.[102] Where more conventional choices were unavailable, and where state law

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[102] By 1915, aspiring communities were quite aware that the cost of securing a traditional college or university was likely beyond their reach. That year, for example, the Everett (Washington) Daily Herald reported that the Southern Methodists had chosen Dallas as the site for their "Great Educational House" in large part because Dallas could afford to donate 700 prime acres of land (of which just 132 were actually needed for the university campus, with the rest being subdivided to the profit of the new university) "and a large amount of cash." Communities like Everett knew full well that they could not possibly match such an offer. See Everett Daily Herald, 22 September 1915.

was not an obstacle, these civic leaders capitalized on their major assets -- a comprehensive high school and a sound tax base -- to establish cost-effective public junior colleges.[103] That some nationally prominent educators, among them Jordan, Koos, Lange, and Zook, may have supported these local initiatives for their own, ideological reasons simply made the task faced by small city leaders to build broad public support on behalf of sponsoring a junior college that much easier, providing them with a useful rhetoric to add to their own justifications. At the same time, it should also be kept in mind that even though civic leaders may have chosen to throw their weight behind the municipal junior college largely by default, these institutions, once established, grew and prospered because they provided a fair return on the time, energy, and resources invested in them by their respective communities.

Summary

The opening chapter questioned a number of the assumptions of junior college historians. Is it at all

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[103] In some states, state-level opposition to such local initiatives forced civic leaders to place their junior colleges under ostensibly "private" governance. The earliest junior colleges in Washington State operated for several years as "private" junior colleges until the state finally adopted permissive legislation.

reasonable, we asked, to assume that the nearly 300 early public junior colleges, established in communities of great diversity, nevertheless served essentially the same purposes, and that these purposes were ideological in character and cosmopolitan in their perspective? And is it any more reasonable to assume that the founding of these colleges by highly autonomous local school districts drew their inspiration from a very small number of university presidents and deans, all associated with institutions far removed from these communities?

When viewed through the lens of the historical record, these assumptions are clearly indefensible. Small cities, at least, independently determined their position on junior college sponsorship, guided by a deliberate weighing of their own aspirations, interests, and the availability of the resources required to undertake such a venture. No common set of purposes, conceived and promulgated by a small cadre of cosmopolitan leaders, significantly influenced this particular class of communities as each evaluated its decision. Rather, the evidence shows that municipal junior colleges arose in response to highly parochial and pragmatic interests, which could vary from one city to the next. What led San Mateo to open its junior college -- a mix of local

boosterism, a favorable state funding formula, and civic pride -- did not pertain in Temple, Texas, which simply had exhausted its other choices. Last, we found that communities were quite pragmatic in approaching the decision to sponsor a junior college. They were not drawn to this institution because of something distinctive in its character, but because, as in the case of Yakima, Washington, it was often their only viable option at a time of decreasing opportunities.

The findings in this chapter also should remind us of the critical role played by parents and their children in sustaining the junior college when, as was inevitable, civic boosters turned their energies to new ventures. It is obvious that significant private benefits could accrue to those parents whose children attended a local college, even if a university education did not follow. Especially for young women, who could secure a grammar school teaching credential through many junior colleges, these schools provided an important gateway to professional employment. But it was the junior college's non-economic benefits that most likely had the greater influence upon small city parents, as they weighed the value of a local junior college. For these parents, youthful independence was something dangerous and fearful, especially if

unsupervised. A junior college enabled parents to extend their supervision over their children for an additional two years, providing a "safe haven" and an alternative to the moral laxity of the university campus. In this context, small city parents should not be dismissed as the hapless instruments of some university president bent upon the Germanization of American higher education. Rather, in a situation of no small irony, it was parental fear of the changing university that helped to fuel widespread replication of municipal junior colleges -- a replication that however unintended, nevertheless furthered university aims and interests.

Lastly, it should no longer be assumed that a junior college was a community's first or preferred choice. For reasons well beyond the control of most small cities, the more prestigious forms of higher education -- private colleges and universities -- had grown difficult to secure through the traditional inducements of land and subventions. In a world of increasingly scarce and costly alternatives, the junior college emerged as the best available option for aspiring small cities, and it was principally for this reason, and not some deep-seated ideological imperative, that civic leaders threw their

political support behind the sponsorship of public junior colleges.

Chapter IV

Worlds Apart: Junior Colleges in Small Towns and Great Cities

Introduction

The preceding chapter advanced an explanation of the municipal junior college's origins that centered on the pivotal role of community interests and local conditions in giving life and direction to this institution. In support of this explanation, the chapter concluded with a description of Temple Junior College's founding in 1926. As the historical record revealed, Temple Junior College was the product of a highly parochial and collective effort, involving a broad cross-section of Temple's civic leadership. Those who boosted for this junior college -- from the Chamber of Commerce to the PTA and the Kiwanis Club -- were not inspired by some university president's vision of a new schooling order but acted out of their own pragmatic and enlightened self-interest. Among Temple's civic leadership, the concerns of cosmopolitan educators -- from standardization to social efficiency -- were simply irrelevant.

The historical record further showed that those who were allied on behalf of Temple Junior College did not act out of any common interest. For some in Temple, a junior college proved attractive as a means of drawing more business to main street. Others saw it as a powerful signal to potential residents, setting their aspiring city apart as a progressive, "thoroughly modern" community. Still others simply wanted to keep their children home for a year or two before sending them off to the universities and colleges clustered around Austin, Dallas, and Houston. But critically, all of these factions united behind the realization came to recognize that a public junior college represented the best means to advance their various ends at a cost they and the community at large were willing to bear.[1]

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[1] Jennings L. Wagoner, among others, has criticized the two-year college for failing to develop a clear conception of its social purposes, and, as a result, for dissipating its energies in taking on any and all tasks. The implication is that the two-year college might have been a more effective institution if it had limited its efforts in keeping with some strong ideological vision. In fact, as products of pragmatic alliances the junior colleges of the first half of this century (and the community colleges of the second half, as well) would have been ill-advised to define their purposes in any narrow or inflexible way. The price paid by the two-year college for the continued support of ever-changing parochial alliances has been a "comprehensive" mission, which provided a useful rationale for the institution to serve as many purposes as there were stakeholders in the alliances upon

Last, our inquiry into Temple Junior College's founding demonstrated that this school was not the first choice of Temple's leading men as they sought to transform their growing community into a "college town." Long before any consideration was given to sponsorship of a junior college, the Temple Chamber of Commerce undertook a number of initiatives to secure a more traditional and prestigious form of higher education. Chamber members first sought to outbid other Texas cities for a denominational college. When this effort failed, they then sought to win a branch campus of the University of Texas. But this plan also came to naught. Temple, for all of its self-confidence, simply lacked the resources to compete against a Dallas or Ft. Worth for one of the few denominational colleges established in Texas after 1920, and the Texas state government had no intention of absorbing the added expense of a multi-campus University of Texas. Only when all other options were precluded did Temple's Chamber and its allies take the pragmatic course and rally behind a public junior college. Simply put,

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which the college's continued existence depended. Jennings L. Wagoner, "The Search for Mission and Integrity: A Retrospective View," in Maintaining Institutional Integrity (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1983), 3.

Temple Junior College was not so much their best, as it was their only option.

The Other 150 Public Junior Colleges

Expanding upon the third chapter's explanation of the emergence of the municipal junior college, the next question to be considered is whether one can reasonably generalize across the full spectrum of early public junior colleges from the experience of municipal junior colleges. Were the conditions that favored junior college sponsorship in such municipalities as Modesto, California, and Scottsbluff, Nebraska -- expanding community wealth, a growing population, a spirit of civic boosterism, the absence of proximate competition, and deep-seated parental fears of unregulated university life -- of equal weight in the small towns of southeastern Kansas or in such great cosmopolitan centers as San Francisco and Chicago? Given the tremendous gap in population, taxing capacity, and future prospects that separated a Holton, Kansas, from a Temple, Texas, or, in turn, a Temple from a Detroit, is it reasonable to assume that every public junior college was

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Interestingly, the Temple school board did not share the Chamber's enthusiasm for a junior college, given its potential demands on the school levy. The board only agreed to sponsor the new college when the Chamber offered both direct subventions and multi-year tuition guarantees.

the product of similar conditions or that all were intended to serve the same interests and ends?

In answer to these questions, this chapter will argue that our explanation of the municipal junior college's origins cannot be extended to include either its small town or great city counterparts. To generalize from the one to the other two would require us to ignore the obvious and substantial differences in the social and material conditions that influenced this diverse array of communities as they weighed the question of junior college sponsorship. It simply strains credibility to argue that the particular mix of influences -- principally parental interests, growing local wealth, and civic aspirations -- that gave impetus to the organization of municipal junior colleges was equally at play in Ponca City, Oklahoma -- with its 3,000 residents, a high school of just 400 students, and no prospects for growth -- much less in Chicago or Detroit.

It would seem improbable, for example, that the optimistic spirit of the small city boosters in San Mateo and Temple flourished with equal effect in the struggling small towns of Mississippi, Iowa, or Kansas -- where every demographic and economic indicator foretold only steady, continued regional decline. In the same vein, neither does

it seem likely that advocates of the junior college in America's great cities valued the institution as an inducement to new residents or as an instrument of civic improvement. During the first quarter of this century, the growth of America's great cities was nothing short of phenomenal, spurred on by foreign immigration and internal migration drawn by the prospect of regular industrial employment. The addition of a small junior college to the school system of a San Francisco or St. Louis could hardly be expected to have any meaningful influence upon the sponsoring city's population growth or economic development one way or the other.

What the record will show is that neither the small town nor great city junior college received its impetus from that extraordinary confluence of civic interests and favorable economic conditions from which emerged the

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There is one notable exception to this general rule: Los Angeles City College. By 1929, Los Angeles's economy had developed a seemingly insatiable demand for young people prepared in the "semi-professions" (e.g., secretarial science, accountancy, and the skilled trades.) The Los Angeles school district, in response to this need, established Los Angeles City College, with William Snyder, holder of a Harvard doctorate, as its director. Snyder, who had previously taught at New York's Working Man's School, introduced the forerunner of the modern "comprehensive" curriculum, balancing "terminal" and liberal arts programs. For a brief biography of Snyder, see Bertha Green, "California School People," Sierra Educational News 28, no. 2 (1932):42.

municipal junior college. As we will find, many of the small towns that sponsored a junior college had no intention of "boosting" for new residents through civic improvements. Their challenge was much more basic -- to stem further population loss and to preserve their metropolitan status in the face of a generalized regional decline. For these small towns, sponsorship of a junior college was intended more to preserve old gains than to entice new residents.

Likewise, the historical record will reveal that small city boosterism, with its naive faith in the power of collective effort to produce civic growth and virtue, played no part in the decisions leading to the establishment of junior colleges in such great cities as Chicago, Newark, and San Francisco. These cities were secure in their metropolitan status. Many were already home to traditional colleges and, as was the case with Chicago, world-renowned universities. Moreover, the junior college, with its conventional university-parallel curriculum and rigorous admission standards, had little to contribute to the immediate challenges facing urban leaders -- widespread poverty, the difficult and costly task of "Americanizing" adult immigrants, and the need for major infrastructure improvements to support a growing

population and expanding industries. Indeed, what the record reveals is that many urban leaders saw the junior college and its narrow, traditional curriculum as a costly irrelevancy, and these leaders were more than willing to oppose the organization of a junior college to a degree unknown among their counterparts in small towns and municipalities.

At the same time, even as we may argue that early junior colleges are best understood as local adaptations of an exceptionally flexible form and not as mere reflections of some rigid model, we are not suggesting that the differences among the three types of communities that sponsored junior colleges were so great as to preclude some common influences. In fact, as this chapter will describe, the weight of the historical evidence indicates that one community interest group -- the parents of recent high school graduates -- was central to the organization of junior colleges in communities of all three types. Regardless of residence, a great many parents of the early twentieth century were simply unwilling to permit their children to attend college away from home, even as they grew increasingly aware of the importance of a college degree to their children's career prospects. While their underlying motives may have varied somewhat

from one community to another (urban parents, for example, appear to have been more concerned about the cost of university attendance, while small town parents were especially fearful of the moral dangers of university life), parents frequently took the lead in forming the alliances that, in the absence of fiable alternatives, gave impetus to the establishment of many junior colleges.

As a means of bringing into clearer focus the differences and commonalities in those conditions that gave impetus to the municipal junior college and its small town and urban counterparts, this chapter will be divided into two sections. The first will examine the more than 175 junior colleges sponsored by small towns, generally with populations of less than 12,500, and concentrated primarily, although not exclusively, in states bordering on the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers. Beyond offering a general description of these small towns and their junior colleges, this section will advance an explanation of why so many communities of this type, despite a lack of resources and the very real prospect of low enrollments, took on the cost and risks of a junior college.

This chapter's second section will look to the nearly 25 junior colleges established in the nation's metropolitan centers, those "great cities" with a

population of more than 250,000. Drawing extensively upon primary sources, this section will describe the often quite extraordinary circumstances that led these cities to establish (or, as was the case in Los Angeles and Chicago, establish, close, and re-establish) junior colleges at a time when other needs were certainly more pressing and the sine qua non of metropolitan status was not a junior college but a comprehensive research university.

The Small Town Junior College

The contrast between early municipal and small town junior colleges could not have been more stark. At one extreme were the junior colleges sponsored by such cities as Joliet, Muskogee, and San Mateo. These were housed in large, modern facilities and staffed by a well-credentialed faculty. In contrast, small town junior colleges were decidedly Spartan ventures. Before 1940, the typical small town junior college enrolled fewer than 75 students, of whom no more than a handful -- if that -- were sophomores.[1] Both its "faculty" of three or four

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[1]As was noted in the second chapter, it is a serious misconception to believe that all public junior colleges offered courses at the freshman and sophomore levels. Many junior colleges in Oklahoma, Iowa, and Minnesota simply lacked the financial means and requisite number of students to go beyond freshman-level courses. One notable example of this class of junior college was the WPA Freshman College, located in Maplewood, Missouri, and

part-time instructors and "campus" of a recitation room or two were borrowed from its sponsoring high school. Its curriculum was invariably of the most conventional sort, rarely venturing beyond the universally accepted subjects of English, chemistry, mathematics, history, and Latin, while its small student body and lack of local resources made maintaining even the pretense of an extra-curriculum a constant challenge.

Ohland Morton's 1934 survey of Oklahoma's fifteen locally-governed junior colleges reflects the extreme disparity in resources that set small town junior colleges apart from their more fortunate municipal counterparts. As Morton found, each of Oklahoma's six small town junior

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founded in 1934. This school, which owed its organization to funding from the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, was designed not so much to provide students with access to a local college as to provide work to unemployed teachers. While Missouri's WPA Freshmen College would survive the withdrawal of its federal funding in 1936, virtually all other F.E.R.A. supported junior colleges did not.

Typical of such small town junior colleges was Minnesota's Jackson Junior College. During the 1916 school year, it made use of "Two rooms in the high school building near a well-equipped library" to instruct a student body of eight. Somehow, the college offered courses in mathematics, English, German, economics, history and science with a faculty of just two, remarkably versatile BA-holders. See W. O. Lippett, "The Junior College at Jackson, Minnesota," School Education (December, 1916): 4.

colleges offered a curriculum limited to freshman-level courses, borrowed its faculty of three or four from its sponsoring high school, and at no one time enrolled more than 40 students. By contrast, the municipal Muskogee Junior College employed a faculty of nine, including a dean, for the instruction of 85 students, divided between 55 freshmen and 30 sophomores.' Moreover, Oklahoma's small town junior colleges were all forced to levy a substantial tuition charge, even upon local residents, because they could not rely upon local tax revenues or private contributions to meet their operating expenses. Muskogee's school board, however, was able to fund its junior college entirely from local tax revenues without any compromise in the funding of its grammar and high schools.

At its root, the problem faced by the small town junior college was one of inherent inefficiency. Small enrollments meant that these colleges could not achieve the economies of scale that would keep their per-student costs within reason and, in the absence of tuition income, minimize their impact on local tax rates. Leonard Koos, in

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' Ohland Morton, "Municipal Junior Colleges in Oklahoma," Junior College Journal 5, no. 3 (1934): 125-126.

the first calculation of this effect using a sample of Michigan communities, compared the relative impact of municipal and small town junior colleges on local tax rates. As reflected in Table 5, Koos found that a small town junior college only exacerbated the inequitably high millage rate that small town residents were already forced to bear as a consequence of the inefficiencies of scale inherent in the operation of a low-enrollment school district with a limited tax base. Indeed, Koos concluded that without the substitution of tax revenue by substantial tuition income (something he strongly opposed on principle), a junior college's impact on a small town's

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[7] Prior to the introduction of state equalization schemes, which did not become widespread in the Midwest until the 1940s, small school districts were faced with the duel dilemma of allocating substantial fixed costs (not only in the form of bond repayments but also from expenditures for a faculty of sufficient size to offer a comprehensive curriculum) over a small number of students, but of then raising the funds required to meet these costs from a small tax base. The result, as Koos's study demonstrated, was that school tax rates were generally inversely related to a community's size. It has been one purpose, not always met, of state-equalization programs to insure that tax- payers in small districts would not be forced to adopt a higher tax rate merely to provide the same level of per-student support as larger and generally wealthier districts. The perceived failure of such programs to meet this objective has produced a steady steam of court decisions mandating further state efforts to equalize aid. See Ronald F. Campbell, et al., The Organization and Control of American Schools (Columbus, OH: Charles E. Merrill, 1975), 50-51.

tax rate would prove so great as to virtually assure taxpayer opposition.

Table 6
Comparison of the Tax Impact of a Public Junior Colleges, in Michigan, by City Size
1924

Michigan Cities and Towns by (by population)	Millage	Millage (with junior college)	Percent Increase
7,000-10,000	10.73	11.95	12.7%
10,000-20,000	9.54	10.62	12.4%
30,000-100,000	8.78	9.58	7.7%

Further undermining the prospects of small town junior colleges was their concentration in slow-growth, economically stagnant states. As was described in the previous chapter, the emergence of the municipal junior college was closely tied to the decision of several million Americans to migrate to the Los Angeles basin, the

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One additional challenge faced by small towns, but overlooked by Koos and his colleagues, grew out of their relatively small number of professionals and merchants. As with the examples of Temple and Tyler, Texas, individuals from these two groups provided the tuition guarantees and subventions that would finally sway a reluctant municipal school board in favor of a local junior college. Small town advocates of a junior college could not reasonably expect the same level of assistance.

San Francisco Bay Area, southeastern Texas, northern Illinois, and southern Michigan between 1900 and 1920 and to then take up residence in small cities that sought to marry the ideal of private home ownership with the cultural advantages of big city life. As the direct beneficiaries of these choices, such communities as Temple, Texas, and Pasadena, California, enjoyed an unprecedented increase in local tax revenue and a dramatic expansion of bonding authority. Not required to bear the significant social and environmental costs under which America's older and more established cities labored, these young cities were free to expend their new-found wealth on a wide range of civic improvements, including junior colleges.*

By contrast, the small towns which sponsored junior colleges were located in states largely by-passed by

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* In some of these new cities, civic leaders made a conscious effort to manage the inflow of new residents. Through their control of planning commissions, these leaders were able to preclude the construction of housing that would attract less affluent families, avoiding the social costs that such families were thought to bring while keeping their communities attractive to more affluent families. In California, this tension was played out in the resistance of planning commissions to proposals from developers for the subdivision of residential lots, onto which could then be built "bungalows," a form of inexpensive housing able to accommodate two families on a parcel initially intended for a more costly, single family dwelling.

America's urbanization and industrialization.[10] Indeed, as Table 6 indicates, just as a majority of municipal junior colleges were concentrated in the rapidly-growing states of California, Texas, and Michigan, a near-majority of all small town junior colleges were established in the slow-growth states of Iowa, Kansas, and Mississippi. Both demographically and economically, these six states were at the national extremes. At one extreme were California, Michigan, and Texas, three of the nation's ten fastest growing states between 1910 and 1940. In the case of

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[10] McKelvey, in his history of American urbanization, argues that the small towns in such states as Mississippi, Nebraska, Kansas, and Iowa also benefitted from the urbanization which transformed New York, Michigan, Illinois, and California. Farm mechanization, he contends, dramatically reduced the need for labor in rural communities, even as farm and mine production increased dramatically. America's rapidly growing urban population not only absorbed much of this new agricultural and mineral output, but in turn produced the finished goods that greatly improved the quality of life for those Americans who remained on its farms and in its mining communities. McKelvey's optimistic analysis, however, fails to fully consider the negative effects of continued out-migration for the network of small towns that mediated between urban and rural America. Population losses within the economic catchment of the small towns of Iowa, Kansas, and Minnesota made it increasingly difficult for them to preserve their core civic institutions. It was not simply a matter of declining efficiencies of scale. Many of those who moved from such small towns as Holton, Kansas, and Gerhing, Nebraska, were professionals and merchants rendered surplus by regional decline, yet it was upon these individuals that the era's civic betterment initiatives most often relied for leadership and financial support. See McKelvey, The Urbanization of America, 63.

California, for example, total population growth for this period was 160 percent, and the number of cities with a population between 10,000 and 250,000 grew from just 18 to 54, almost all of which were located within a 100 mile radius of either San Francisco or Los Angeles.[13]

At the other extreme were the states of Iowa, Mississippi, and Kansas, two of which were among the nation's ten states with the lowest rates of population growth between 1910 and 1940. In the case of Kansas, for example, overall population growth approximated just 1.5 percent a decade, while Iowa's population grew at a rate of less than 5 percent a decade. Moreover, much of Kansas' population growth was limited to Kansas City and its immediate suburbs, just as Iowa's population growth was concentrated in a few cities on its eastern border, while Mississippi's was centered in Meridian City and Hinds County. Throughout much of northern Mississippi, western

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[13] Bureau of the Census, 16th Census of the United States: 1940, 515.

Iowa and rural Kansas, many old, established communities experienced an absolute population decline.[42]

Table 7
Total Junior Colleges and Rate of Population Change, Selected States,
1900 - 1940

State	Population Growth Rate 1910-1940	Rank (of 48)	Junior Colleges Established: 1910- 1940		
			Urban	Small City	Small Town
High Growth					
California	190.5%	1	4	40	18
Michigan	87.0%	4	1	8	3
Texas	64.6%	7	2	15	7
Low Growth					
Mississippi	21.5%	38	0	1	14
Iowa	14.1%	43	0	3	26
Kansas	6.5%	47	0	8	10

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[42] The following are a sample of small, Midwestern towns which experienced a net population decline between 1910 and 1930. Each sponsored a public junior college.

Town	1910	1920	1930
Itasca, MN	1,613	1,300	1,243
Harper, KS	1,638	1,770	1,485
Ellsworth, IA	406	512	405
Iola, KS	9,032	8,513	7,160

	Junior Colleges	7	75	78

Regardless of the enthusiasm of their proponents, the concentration of small town junior colleges in predominately rural, slow-growth states made their survival decidedly problematic. More like the small denominational colleges of the nineteenth century, these colleges did not enjoy the favorable economic and demographic conditions that had insulated municipal junior colleges from those crises -- fire, precipitous enrollment declines, institutional bankruptcy, and a loss of sponsorship.[1] In contrast, with few students, dependent upon a meager tax base and a struggling local economy, and forced to share inferior facilities with a hard-pressed high school, the continuation of a small town junior college was never certain.

The fate of Kansas's earliest junior colleges highlights the relative disadvantage under which small

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[1] On the rare occasion when a municipal junior college did close, it was far more likely to be the victim of an antagonistic state government than some unforeseen calamity. And in most instances, these municipal junior colleges re-opened once state opposition abated. In California, several municipal junior colleges closed in 1915 following a ruling by the state Attorney General that they were being operated without legal basis. This ruling was effectively reversed by the state legislature in 1917, and many of the junior colleges closed in 1915 were then re-opened.

town junior colleges operated. In Kansas, sponsorship of the state's first four junior colleges, opened between 1917 and 1921, was equally divided between municipalities and small towns. The state's two municipal junior colleges, organized at Fort Scott and Garden City, operate to this day. However, by 1922 the two small town junior colleges, established at Holton and Marysville, had been closed by their sponsoring school boards for want of students and taxpayer support.[14] In Minnesota, the state's small town junior colleges fared no better. There, three small town junior colleges were established before 1920: at Cloquet, Jackson, and Pipestone. By 1923, all three were closed.[15]

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[14] At the same time, one must be careful not to overstate the mortality rate of small town junior colleges, as some have. O'Brien, for example, claimed that only three of the original 12 junior colleges established after the adoption of Kansas' 1917 junior college act were still in operation by 1923. In fact, only two of the twelve -- at Holton and Marysville -- closed. See F. F. O'Brien, "Development of the Junior College in Kansas," Junior College Journal 2, no. 2 (1931): 78.

[15] Cloquet's junior college opened in 1914 and closed in 1918. Jackson Junior College operated from 1916 to 1918, while the town of Pipestone opened its junior college in 1919, only to close it in 1924. See State of Minnesota, "Brief History of Minnesota's Community Colleges," unpublished memorandum (St. Paul: May 5,1992), 3.

The triumph of unyielding demographic and economic realities over local aspirations that culminated in the closure of so many small town junior colleges is exemplified by Nebraska's short-lived Walthill Junior College. Located some eighty miles north of Omaha and surrounded by the Omaha Reservation, the small town of Walthill had limited resources and no real prospect for growth when its school board chose to follow the lead of the growing cities of Scottsbluff and McCook and establish a junior college. However, unlike either Scottsbluff or McCook, Walthill was neither a major commercial nor governmental center, its population was stagnate, and any high school graduate who wished to attend college had only to travel 25 miles to Sioux Falls College. Nevertheless, and for reasons which are not entirely clear, Walthill's school board authorized the establishment of a junior college on September 4, 1928 and appointed John Ludwickson the college's new president and dean.[16]

By all outward appearances, Walthill's school board and Ludwickson sincerely believed that Walthill could maintain a successful junior college. Ludwickson employed four new faculty members, each with a master's degree, at

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[16] Saylor, Galen, et al., Legislation, Finance, and Development of Public Junior Colleges, 123

an annual salary of $1250 each. He also secured the approval of the University of Nebraska's examiner for his new faculty and the school's curriculum. For its part, the Walthill school board adopted a yearly tuition of $108 to provide the college with an income independent of school tax revenues. But these efforts failed to induce students to enroll, and when Walthill Junior College opened in October 1928 only eight students presented themselves for class. Obviously, a student body of this size, paying just $108 each, could not produce sufficient tuition income to meet the cost of even one instructor, much less the college's four, and neither the school board nor Ludwickson had any reason to expect that subsequent freshman classes would be any larger. Without a business community willing and able to make up its tuition shortfall, continuation of the junior college would have required the district to draw heavily on general school tax revenue. Rather than face the voters for approval of a major tax rate override, the Walthill school board simply reversed course and closed its junior college after its first and only semester. As Saylor observed:

> The total expenditures for maintaining the college raised the tax rate to a point where it seemed unwise to continue the college for another year.

In such a generally unfavorable context, how does one explain the willingness of more than 150 small towns to sponsor a public junior college in the years before 1940? As will be described, three interest groups provided the necessary impetus which induced these communities to make what would seem to have been, at least on the surface, an impractical and ill-considered decision. First were small town parents, who appear to have been even more reluctant than small city parents to permit their children to leave home for college. Second were those who argued, all objective conditions notwithstanding, that a public junior college still made reasonable economic sense for their particular community. Recalling many of the same arguments raised in the municipalities of California and Texas, these small town junior college proponents claimed that a local junior college could stem the economic drain that resulted when even a few high school graduates left home for college. A third, and somewhat special group of junior college advocates were those small town civic leaders who,

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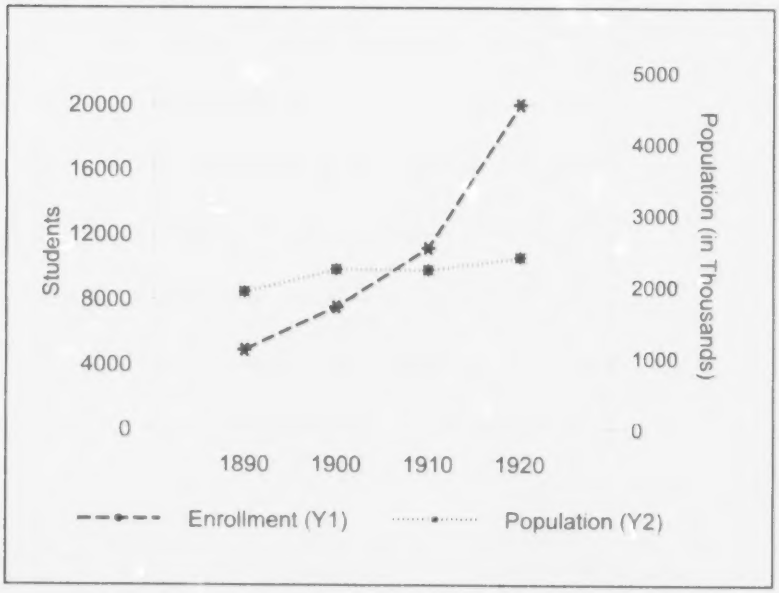
Saylor, Legislation, Finance, and Development of Public Junior Colleges, 124.

faced with the unexpected loss of a local private college or normal school, turned to the public junior college in the hope of preserving their community's metropolitan status.

1. The Interests of Small Town Parents

While the direct evidence is limited, it would seem that parents constituted the single most important and persistent influence working on behalf of the small town junior college. Well-to-do parents in America's small towns were no less aware of the growing importance of academic credentials to the future career aspirations of

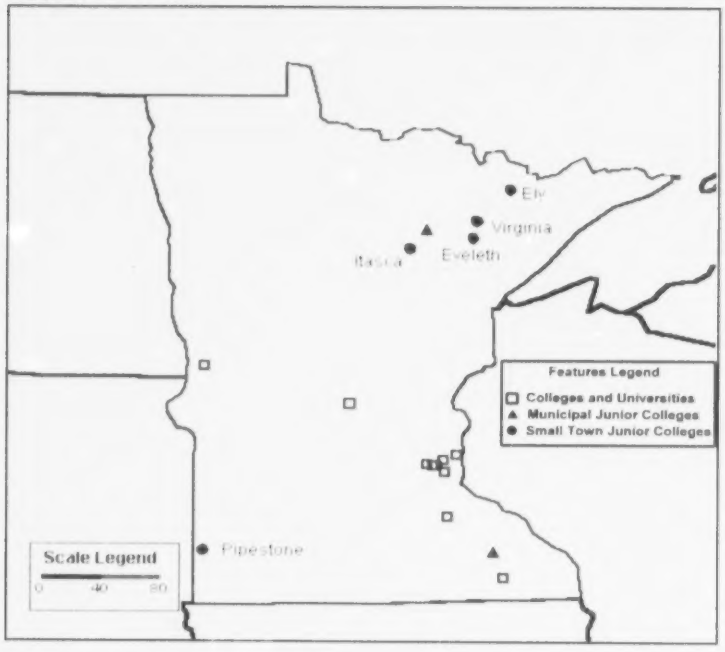
Fig. 1
College Enrollment and General Population Trends for Iowa, 1890 - 1920



their children than were their small city peers. That small town parents were as willing as parents in larger communities to support their children in gaining these credentials is suggested by college enrollments trends in early twentieth century Iowa, a state of small towns and scattered farming communities. As figure 5 shows, not only did Iowa's college and university enrollments grow substantially after 1900, but this increase came even as the state's total population grew by just 10 percent.

Contributing to the desire of small town parents to secure a proximate college education for their children was the often great distances that separated their communities from the nearest college or university. Two maps, showing the distribution of colleges and universities in Minnesota and Missouri as of 1926, reflect the geographic isolation of small towns which chose to sponsor a junior college. In the case of Minnesota (map 1), five small town junior colleges were concentrated in just two regions. Four — Itasca, Eveleth, Virginia, and Ely — were strung along the upper reaches of Minnesota's Iron Range, far to the north of the University of Minnesota and the four other colleges and universities clustered around Minneapolis-St. Paul. Minnesota's other small town junior college, at Pipestone, was located in

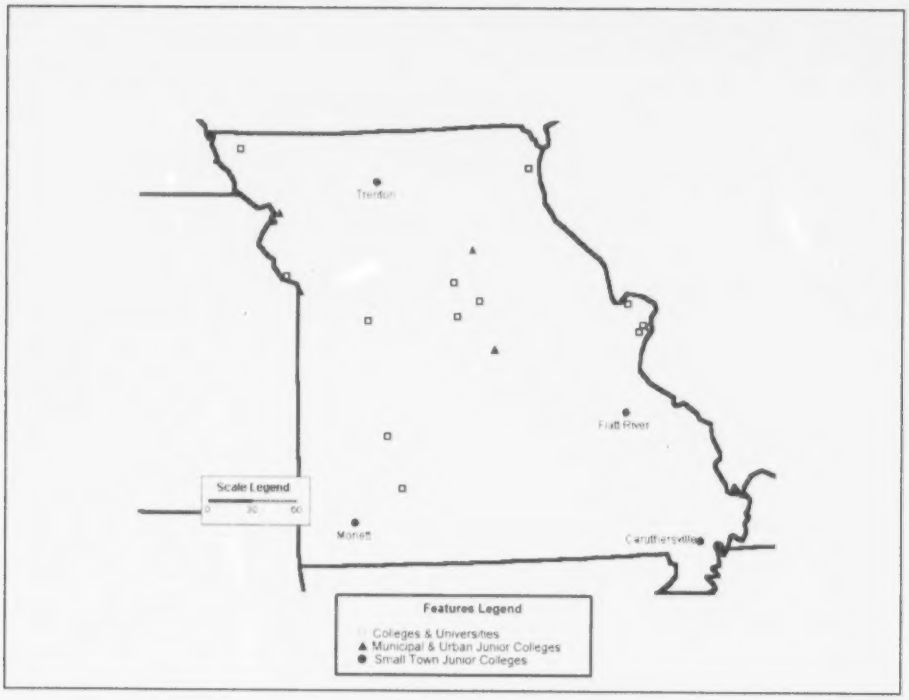
Map 1
Minnesota Colleges and Universities, by Type, 1926



the state's far southwestern corner, more than 150 miles from Minneapolis-St. Paul.

In Missouri (map 2), the isolation of small towns that sponsored a junior college is equally apparent. Although Missouri supported a number of private colleges and even two universities in 1928, virtually all were located along a narrow corridor running between St. Louis and Kansas City. Especially for the young people living in the small Missouri towns to the south of this corridor, college attendance necessitated relocation, an option as

Map 2
Missouri Colleges and Universities, By Type
1928



much deplored by small town Missouri parents as it had been by Kansas City's parents a decade earlier. And much like the parents of Kansas City, these small town parents increasingly turned to the junior college as an answer to their concerns. Within just six years, junior colleges were organized in the Missouri towns of Flatt River (1922), Trenton (1926), Monett (1927), and Caruthersville (1928).

Beyond the obstacles posed by distance itself, small town parents shared the distrust of small city parents in the commitment of university faculty to provide for the

proper moral development of their children. Walter O. Lippitt, the dean of Minnesota's small town Jackson Junior College, was merely echoing the view of many parents with his assertion that the large and impersonal university campus was "decidedly detrimental to the physical, mental, and moral welfare" of younger students.[16] But for small town parents, this concern was heightened by the sheer size of contemporary universities. By the turn of the century, many Midwestern state universities had grown into large cities in their own right. On a university campus of 4,000 students and 1,000 faculty and staff, the small town student could easily find him or herself lost and overwhelmed, attending lectures that held more students than were enrolled in his high school. Not everyone felt that these changes were in the best interest of the undergraduate, as Veysey has observed:

> [e]specially at the state universities, there were already complaints that the undergraduate had been set adrift unaided, to find himself as best he could in an extremely impersonal environment.[17]

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[16] Lippitt, "The Junior College at Jackson, Minnesota," 4.

[17] Veysey, The Emergence of the American University, 339.

Should one be surprised that small town parents might have been reluctant to suddenly throw their children -- who had lived their entire lives in small and tightly-knit communities -- entirely upon their own devices in what must certainly have seemed an alien, even threatening world of several thousand unsupervised students? Would an upstanding parent in Auburn, California, feel comfortable with the thought that his or her daughter would reside in Stanford's infamous student shanty town or be free to explore the temptations of Berkeley unsupervised? Indeed, the editors of American Education Digest would go so far as to suggest that the small town junior college was not an offspring of the American university, meant to further university aims, but that it arose as "a protest against the inefficiency and inadequacy of the regular college," with its "large sections and little individual attention."[20]

"The Junior College Again," American Educational Digest 47,(August, 1928): 552. A similar theme was struck by Dean Fleagle of Georgia's private Marion Institute at the first meeting of the American Association of Junior Colleges in 1921:

> At a time when the student most needs individual attention and instruction, he becomes, under [university] conditions, merely a name on the class list of a too often youthful and unskilled instructor.

Coming from proponents of the small town junior college, one might be tempted to question both the sincerity of their criticism of the university -- their chief competitor for students -- and the extent to which these junior colleges acted in specific ways to provide their students with a morally "safe" education. But there is substantial evidence that those responsible for small town junior colleges did, in fact, go to considerable lengths to replicate the cloistered and closely regulated life of the Old Time College at their institutions. Moreover, and possibly even somewhat surprisingly, their students give every indication of having fully supported and encouraged these efforts.

California's Placer Junior College, established in 1914 in the small town of Auburn, represents a good case in point. Under the leadership of J.R. Engle, the Placer county school board organized a junior college that was committed to providing its students with small classes, a traditional curriculum, close direction, and few worldly distractions. Engle, in his public pronouncements, repeatedly emphasized these goals. At his college, nothing radical or revolutionary would endanger his students; his college would be a perfect mirror of the academically sound and morally upright college of old.

Indeed, as Engle assured local residents, their new junior college at Auburn would not merely replicate the University of California's curriculum, but would offer instruction that was more rigorous and complete. To this end, Engle not only lengthened the school year to ten months (the academic year at Berkeley was just nine), he also introduced a mandatory logic course for sophomore students, clearly a throwback to the moral philosophy course popularized by antebellum Brown's President Wayland.[21] But most interestingly of all, Placer Junior College's students give every indication of having shared Engle's seriousness of purpose. As noted in the 1916 edition of their annual, the Potpourri, Placer's students had established no groups or clubs "for the purpose of giving dances, faits, and entertainments." And this was exactly as they wished things to be, since, they bluntly reminded readers, "we are here for work."[22]

That other small town junior college students also viewed their schools as a substitute for the Old Time College is suggested by one of the first instances of direct student involvement in modifying a junior college's

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[21] Auburn Herald, 23 August 1915.

[22] Students of Placer Junior College, Potpourri, (Auburn, CA: 1916), 58.

curriculum. In 1921, the students of Kansas's Fort Scott Junior College petitioned the town's school board to add a bible class to the junior college's curriculum. The Fort Scott school board welcomed the student request, and agreed to authorize the course. However, school board members felt that they should neither select the instructor nor pay him from public funds. This obstacle was quickly overcome when the Fort Scott ministerial association agreed to both select and compensate an instructor. Having carefully avoided church-state entanglement, the Fort Scott school board was able to provide its junior college students with a curriculum little different from what was then being offered by the state's many small denominational colleges.[93]

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[93] Fort Scott Tribune, 22 September 1922. The religious character of Fort Scott Junior College and its students is further suggested by the program for the junior college's student assembly of September 14, 1923. The assembly was opened by the Rev. Sumner Walterns, Pastor of Fort Scott's Episcopal Church. He led devotional exercises and then offered an address in which he argued that there was "no conflict between religion and education." Indeed, he continued, as a result of their "scientific" studies at the college, Fort Scott's students would come to think more of religion, rather than less. Walterns's address was followed by a piano solo and brief comments by members of the college faculty. Fort Scott Tribune, 14 September 1923.

2. An Economic Justification

Small town parents concerned with the prospect of sending their children to a distant and threatening university found an ally among other community residents who viewed the relocation of young people for college a significant economic drain on their local economy. At a time when the annual cost of college attendance ranged from about $400 (for a tuition-free state university) to $1,000 (for a prestigious Eastern college), the decision of even a dozen high school graduates to leave their small town for college could drain several thousand dollars from the local economy, with no guarantee that the students, once graduated, would return home to assume positions of civic leadership. From this perspective, small town economies, already in difficult straits, were wasting scarce resources on the education of young people who would likely never return, but take professional positions in Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York.

The economic justification to expend local school revenue on a small town junior college took a fairly consistent form: an overstated estimate of the costs to the community of supporting students at residential colleges and universities was then followed by an understated estimate of the cost of educating these

students at the town's public junior college. The dean of Fort Scott Junior College, J. H. Shideler, justified public support of his school on the grounds that in keeping just 32 students in Fort Scott, his junior college retained at least $20,000 in the local economy that would have otherwise found its way to Lawrence or Emporia.[24] Similarly, Burlington Junior College's first catalogue answered the question, "Why Should Burlington Maintain a Junior College?" with the rather questionable calculation that the school not only kept some $50,000 a year from leaving the Burlington economy but did so at a cost of "less than fifteen hundred dollars" to Burlington taxpayers.[25]

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[24] "Two Year's College Work," Fort Scott Herald, 4 March 1922. Shideler's estimate was a bit fanciful. The University of Kansas charged no tuition, and room and board likely cost a frugal student no more than $250 a year in 1921. At most, a student who relocated to the university "cost" Fort Scott $400, assuming that the student did not, as many did, work for all or a portion of room and board charges. With respect to Burlington's figures, it is inconceivable that the city's junior college kept $50,000 in town, but based on Cotton's analysis of the annual cost of comparably-sized junior colleges in Oklahoma, it is possible that Burlington did expend just $1500 on its junior college.

[25] Some Items in the History of Burlington Junior college: 1920-1970: 5. This manuscript cites as its source page 38 of the Burlington Junior College Catalogue for 1925, a copy of which the Burlington Library was unable to locate.

Particularly after 1920, a pair of largely unrelated trends in public school governance and finance coincidently strengthened the argument that the small town junior college was economically viable. The first of these was the expansion of many small town school districts through the annexation of adjacent, sparsely-populated rural districts.[*] Encouraged by state governments, which principally viewed school district consolidation as a means of strengthening public high schools, annexation not only increased marginal student enrollment, thereby reducing per-student costs, but the larger tax base that school districts gained through annexation both produced new annual revenue and increased a school district's bonding authority. This second benefit enabled many small towns to construct comprehensive high schools comparable to Joliet's famous Central High, if on a more modest

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[*] One representative effort to promote school consolidation came in the form of a survey undertaken by the Missouri Department of Education in 1931-32. The department's survey recommended that the state's "haphazard district organization" of 1,000 high school districts and 7,500 rural districts be merged into just 400 comprehensive school districts. Had the recommendation been implemented the new districts would have possessed a tax base sufficient to support a network of public junior colleges in addition to modern, comprehensive high schools. See Charles A. Lee, "A Proposed Statewide Public Junior College Organization for Missouri" (Ed.D. diss., Teachers College, 1935), 5.

scale.[1] The addition these new facilities, and the larger faculty that followed, opened the way for some communities to expand their high school curriculum to include a postgraduate program or even a modest junior college.[2]

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[1] While school consolidation was key to the ability of small town school districts to support both a comprehensive school program and a junior college, it was not always easily accomplished even when encouraged by the state. As one might expect, those who lived in rural districts threatened with annexation objected to the prospect of contributing to the support of a combination high school-junior college which was not within an easy commute of their children. Beginning in 1926, for example, the Santa Rosa, California, school board attempted to annex all of its smaller, adjacent school districts to broaden its tax base and better support its large high school and junior college. But by 1929 it had succeeded in annexing just one small district. The voters in the communities of Healdsburg, Petaluma, and Sonoma all successfully held off consolidation for a number of years. Bailey, Santa Rosa Junior College, 1918-1957, 66-67.

[2] The introduction of comprehensive public high schools also contributed indirectly to the organization of public junior colleges. In Mississippi, the advent of community high schools drew students way from the state's network of residential high schools, leaving them to choose between transforming themselves into regional junior colleges or closing. Led by Hinds County Agricultural School in Raymond, Mississippi, many opted for the latter course. See Edith Anna Lathrop, Dormitories in Connection with Public Secondary Schools, Bureau of Education Bulletin, no. 12 (Washington, DC: 1922), 26-27.

Nor was this problem limited to Mississippi. In Texas, one finds several examples of standard colleges that were forced to give up their academy programs as high school students increasingly stayed at home for their secondary education, forcing their reorganization as junior colleges. The Methodist Blinn Memorial College, which saw its enrollments fall steadily as students increasingly chose enrollment in a public high school over its academy department, only avoided closure when it

Particularly after 1920, professional school publications chronicled the spread of the comprehensive high school to America's small town school districts. Where these publications had once featured the new high schools constructed in such cities as LaGrange, Illinois, and Pasadena, California, they increasingly turned their attention to developments in small towns. As reported in School Executives Magazine, for example, the voters of the Sherman school district, which encompassed the small town of Seth, West Virginia, and its rural environs, approved a bond to replace their 3-room country school with a modern three-story high school incorporating a library, gymnasium, science laboratories, and athletic fields in addition to traditional recitation rooms. With completion of the new facility, the school's faculty of three grew quickly to ten, and the curriculum was expanded to include non-academic vocational programs.[39]

A second development that strengthened the position of local small town junior college advocates was the introduction of state all-weather road systems after 1910,

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convinced the voters of Washington County to endorse its reorganization as their public junior college.

[39] "School Buildings for Smaller Communities," School Executives Magazine 48 (January, 1929): 204.

prompted by the rapid adoption of the auto by American farmers, and the subsequent introduction of the schcol bus as a means to expand the reach of small down school districts into surrounding rural communities. The experience of Nebraska typified the rapid spread of all-weather roads early in this century. In 1909, just one Nebraska county had more than 100 miles of improved roads, while 77 of the state's 90 counties had no improved roads. But with aid derived from the 1916 Federal Road Act, Nebraska moved quickly to improve matters. By 1921, nearly 6,000 miles of Nebraska roads were designated as post roads and connected many of the states small cities and towns, and by 1930 the state had paved nearly 500 miles of road, graveled an additional 5,000 and graded another 3,300. Virtually every county seat was connected by an all-weather road and the counties, for their part, devoted an increasing portion of their property tax revenue to improving intra-county road networks.[10] The introduction of the affordable car, the school bus, and good roads dramatically increased the catchment of small town school districts, thereby freeing them from the need to construct

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[10] James Olson and Ronald C. Naugle, History of Nebraska (3rd ed.) (Lincoln NB: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 300.

costly dormitories as a means of drawing students from outside their immediate community.

The contribution of these trends to the viability of small town junior colleges is suggested by the 1936 revival of Auburn's Placer Junior College. As was noted previously, the small town of Auburn, located in California's northwestern mining region, had first established a junior college in 1914. While enjoying broad-based support within the Auburn community, the junior college never attracted more than 20 students before it was closed sometime after 1916. The city of Auburn, with a population of less than 3,000, was simply too small to maintain a viable junior college on its own, and the possibility of drawing students from adjacent communities, such as nearby Roseville, was hampered by poor roads and the lack of public transportation.

In 1936, the Placer Union High School District secured voter approval to establish a new junior college, even winning approval of a bond for a separate junior college campus. Auburn's second junior college proved far more successful than its first, primarily because it was not dependent upon Auburn alone for its students. Having been permitted the use of its sponsoring school district's buses, the junior college not only introduced regular bus

service for students within its own district but, taking advantage of California's improved roads, extended this service to students from two adjacent districts. As young people came to take advantage of this free bus service, the effect on the new school's enrollment was dramatic. From just slightly more than 100 students in 1936, Placer Junior College's enrollment more than doubled – to 235 – in 1937.[11]

3. Preserving a Community's Status

Among the 175 small town junior colleges, it is possible to identify approximately 15 or 20 which clearly gained their impetus less from the actions of parents than from a seemingly quixotic desire among civic leaders to preserve their town's regional prominence shortly after the unexpected closure of a local denominational or normal college. These towns, including Harper and Highland, Kansas, Grand Island, Nebraska, Auburn City, California, and Bentham, Texas, had achieved a measure of regional prominence in the nineteenth century. Many of these towns had been settled between 1850 and 1870, sometimes as forts, as with Kansas' Fort Scott, often as centers of regional trade, as in the case of Auburn, California, and

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[11] "Placer Junior College Growth," Junior College Journal 8, no. 3 (1937): 145.

Cloquet, Minnesota, or even as a refuge for persecuted immigrants from Europe.[1] Over the course of several decades, they had achieved a measure of regional prominence as centers of culture, commerce, and government for widely dispersed farm and mining communities. By the late nineteenth century, most of these towns had won designation as county seats and acquired many of the civic institutions -- churches, a hotel and bank, a court, a Western Union office, and common school -- then associated with metropolitan status. If especially fortunate, and willing to provide needed facilities and regular subscriptions, a town might secure an academy, proprietary normal school, or denominational college.

But after 1910 many of these towns saw their fortunes wane. Their function as regional centers of cultural and commerce was first undercut by improved rail networks in the late nineteenth century and then by the introduction of all-weather road systems in the early twentieth century.[2] The signs of civic decline were unavoidable.

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[1] Bentham, Texas, was the final point of settlement for German Methodists fleeing government-sanctioned religious prosecution.

[2] Some of the small cities that would eventually sponsor a junior college were the direct beneficiaries of the relocation of professionals and merchants that came with the extension of rail lines. Prior to the extension

Most obviously, there was population stagnation or even decline. The experience of Cloquet, Minnesota's first town to sponsor a junior college, was typical in this respect. Beginning with slightly more than 7,000 residents in 1910, Cloquet's population fell to just 5,100 by 1920, and only recovered to 6,800 by 1930. The town's decision to establish a junior college in 1913 may well have seemed reasonable in a community of 7,000, but the new school's fate was sealed when Cloquet's population began its steady and precipitous decline after 1910, and the school survived only a year or two.

The effects of population loss on such small towns as Cloquet were widespread, but hit especially hard at the institutional hallmarks of civic status. Newspapers, once daily, became weekly. Hotels closed, as did banks and

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of the Burlington's main line to the north of the Platte River, the town of Gerhing, Nebraska, had achieved a measure of prominence as the seat of Scottsbluff County and the major trading center for the large cattle ranches from the towns of Sydney on the east to Scottsbluff on the north. But in 1900, a new Burlington rail line was completed through the town of Scottsbluff, by-passing Gerhing. Within the year, most of Gerhing's professionals and merchants relocated to Scottsbluff, aware that the railroad would bring growth to Scottsbluff at Gerhing's expense. Some of these individuals actually went so far as to dismantle and bring their buildings and homes with them, leaving Gerhing a literal shell of its former self. Winfield Evans, "Here Are Some Facts," in Scottsbluff and the North Platte Valley (Scottsbluff, NB: Scottsbluff Star-Herald, 1967), 31-33.

opera houses, while the all-critical rail service was reduced or even eliminated. Those small towns, unlike Cloquet, fortunate enough to have secured some form of higher education during an earlier period of growth and prosperity, found these institutions -- small colleges, normal schools, and academies -- especially vulnerable. In the face of declining enrollments, exacerbated by the closure of preparatory departments rendered irrelevant by the greater accessibility of public high schools, these institutions found continued operation increasingly difficult, and many either closed outright or removed to other towns to merge with often equally troubled small colleges.

For many of these small towns, the loss of a college or normal school was a blow to civic pride that was not easily accepted. Indeed, when faced with such a challenge to civic status, a surprising number of these communities sought to replace their lost institution with a public junior college. During the prosperous 1920s, as in the case of Burlington, Iowa, and Fort Scott, Kansas, most of these conversions succeeded. But as economic conditions worsened at the start of the 1930s, similar attempts met with mixed results. Among the failed attempts was the 1931 drive by the civic leaders of Nebraska's Grand Island to

win voter approval to open a public junior college on the campus abandoned by their Baptist college.[14] Among the few successful efforts were the 1937 conversion of the struggling Blinn Memorial College into a public junior college and the transfer of Thatcher, Arizona's LDS Gila Junior College to public control in 1933.[15] But one of the

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[14] The events surrounding the failure of civic leaders to establish a public junior college on the foundation of the Baptist's Grand Island College will be detailed in Chapter 5.

[15] The extraordinarily tortured history of Blinn Memorial College, established in 1883 as a seminary for German Methodist ministers, reflects the struggle of many small, denominational colleges as they sought to find a permanent place in a rapidly rationalizing schooling system. By 1910, Blinn had all but given up instruction in German and had moved beyond its baccalaureate program to add an academy, a well-enrolled commercial course, as well as normal and music departments, in the process more than doubling its enrollment of 99 in 1883 to 225 in 1913. But enrollment soon declined, as the preparatory and commercial departments saw their students leave for the tuition free public high schools in Bentham and surrounding towns. By 1926, the college was virtually bankrupt, and its board agreed that it must "enter into a new field of service or be abandoned." The answer was to seek voter approval of the reorganization of Blinn as Bentham's public junior college. However, it would not be until 1937, and then only after one failed referendum and the eventual adoption of a special enabling act by the Texas legislature, that this was accomplished and Blinn was saved from closure. See Schmidt, History of Blinn College (1883-1958), 22-53. In Thatcher, Arizona, matters went much better for the local proponents of a public junior college. Within two years of the LDS church's 1931 decision to end support for Gila Junior College, which had operated in Thatcher for more than 50 years, Gila County voters approved its re-incorporation as a public junior college. Thomas Alexander Scott, "Eastern Arizona College:

earliest and best documented attempts by a small town's civic leadership to restore its community's lost status through the establishment of a junior college is not to be found in a Midwestern town, but from Auburn, one of northwestern California's original mining communities."

The pattern of decline and attempted revitalization followed by the civic leaders of Auburn after 1910 would be repeated in Kansas, Nebraska, Texas, and other states over the next two decades. In contrast to the small cities just then developing around San Francisco and Los Angeles, Auburn had achieved both regional prominence and prosperity during the later part of the nineteenth century as a center of trade and county government. The city reached a population of some 2,000 by 1880 as the region

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A Comprehensive History of the Early Years" (Ph.D. diss., Brigham Young University, 1985): 638-651.

" An interesting variant on this general theme can be found in the unfortunate experience of Washington State's small town of Centralia. This little community, whose population stood at less than 8,000 in 1920, had expected to be home to a state normal school. Funding for the school was to have been provided through a state-wide 1/10th mill levy which, by 1925, had already raised some $450,000 for this purpose. Regrettably for Centralia, the state legislature abolished the levy in February, 1925, and reverted the money to the state's general fund. Left with no chance of a state-funded college, the city organized a junior college just six months later, relying upon subsidies from local businesses and a hefty tuition charge. See "Normal School Measure Passed by Legislators," Centralia (WA) Daily Chronicle 10 February 1925.

it serviced benefitted from intensive mining and logging, and from this point onward Auburn's civic leaders moved aggressively to secure their city's standing as the economic and cultural hub for all of northeastern California. By the close of the nineteenth century, as one local historian has observed, this ambitious objective had been largely met:

> It was in 1899 that Auburn recorded a population of over 2000, had five churches, daily trains going east and west, a sewer and water system, daily mail service, and stage lines."

Nor, like other aspiring communities of the time, were Auburn's civic leaders satisfied with these accomplishments. In 1900, the Placer County Hospital was founded, followed shortly thereafter by construction of an opera house. Through a generous gift from Andrew Carnegie, the city opened its first public library in 1909.

Auburn's leading men did not overlook education in their rush to "boost" their town, although, like the boom towns of antebellum Ohio and Indiana, they first sought to secure a college before taking any significant steps to

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M.E. Gilberg, Auburn, A California Mining Camp Comes of Age, (New Castle, CA: Gilmer Press, 1986), 84.

develop tax-supported primary and secondary education.[*] Auburn's civic leaders moved early to take the then-customary steps to secure a college. In 1882, the town offered a number of inducements to "win" Sierra Normal College, a proprietary institution, from Roseville and other nearby towns. The school's owners, Dr. N.W. Ward, A.W. Sutphon, and M.L. Fries, selected Auburn when the city's most prominent resident, General Joseph Hamilton, donated a campus, and fellow citizens agreed to provide an annual subvention of $13,000 to defray the college's operating costs.

Auburn's progress toward metropolitan status was not without its obstacles and occasional setbacks. As late as 1900, attempts to "clean up" the town, particularly by closing its numerous opium dens, did not go well, and local merchants heard regular complaints from their customers about the dust-plagued main street. But in 1910, Auburn's leaders were confronted by an even more direct and serious threat to their civic aspirations. That year, Sierra Normal College abruptly suspended operation. While a shock to Auburn's leadership, one can see that the

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[*] It would not be until 1907 that Auburn City joined with other local school districts in bonding to construct a modern high school.

closing of Sierra Normal College was all but inevitable. After 1900 Auburn's population stagnated, as the region's silver mines played out and as economic activity shifted gradually to Reno to the town's east and to Sacramento to its west. The town's weakening economy certainly raised concerns among Sierra Normal's owners about the ability of Auburn's business community to maintain its annual subvention. But even more importantly, Sierra College increasingly saw its students drawn to California's free, state-operated normal schools at Sacramento and Sonoma. The introduction of California's first all-weather roads, linking Auburn to the larger cities on its east and west, meant that the loss of students would almost certainly worsen.

But Auburn's civic leaders had no intention of acquiescing to this blow to their pretensions to regional prominence. Much as civic boosters would come to do in other states, Auburn sought a substitute for its failed college in a public junior college. In 1913 Auburn's public schools acquired Sierra Normal's abandoned campus and put it to immediate use as a comprehensive high school, laying the groundwork for the addition of a public junior college.

Although just three years in California, the public

junior college was a familiar concept to Auburn's civic leaders, having been featured in the city's newspaper, the Herald, as one of the "remarkable" schooling innovations of the era.[1] Moreover, these leaders must have certainly seen themselves as ideally positioned to add a junior college program to their new regional high school. The high school could claim a well-credentialed and committed faculty -- its members routinely spent their summers in study at Berkeley -- and a growing enrollment. The elements were present to support a successful junior college. Moreover, at the time California law placed few barriers in the way of a school board intent upon opening a public junior college, requiring nothing more than the approval of a board majority, which was secured in 1913. The town's junior college admitted its inaugural class in 1914 and survived for at least two years until the same conditions that led to the closure of Sierra Normal College -- under-enrollment, the lack of any meaningful state aid, and the inaccessibility of the town -- forced its suspension until conditions improved more than twenty years later.

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[1] Auburn Herald, 5 September 1914.

4. Balancing Interests and Objective Conditions

It is difficult not to sympathize with the concerns of small town parents, fearful of the moral dangers posed to their children by the era's large, impersonal state universities, and reluctant to see them relocate at such great distances. It is also easy to understand and appreciate the motives of small town boosters in supporting a public junior college as a means of revitalizing their struggling communities, particularly in those small towns that had, in better times, supported a private college or normal school. Indeed, while a number of small town junior colleges did fail, particularly in the difficult years after 1930, the vast majority survived, overcoming the constraints of size, limited taxing capacity and private support, and high relative costs. Small town junior colleges drew their strength principally from the fact that in the small and generally isolated towns of the Midwest, they allowed parents to re-create for their own children something of the intimacy of the Old Time College, free of the dangers posed by fraternities, dormitories, and the other moral pitfalls of university life. Indeed, as we saw in the case of Fort Scott and Yakima Junior Colleges, at least some small town junior colleges not only provided their students with a

sound academic programs, but a rich and lively extra-curriculum.

At the same time, small town school boards often quickly and painfully discovered that objective conditions adverse to maintaining a junior college were not readily overcome. Simply securing an adequate enrollment could pose a challenge, and where they levied a substantial tuition, small town junior colleges had great difficulty in meeting their costs without forcing an increase in the local school tax -- an action obviously unpopular in regions suffering from a generalized economic decline. Caught between the interests of their proponents and the reality of limited resources, many small town junior colleges were faced with the constant prospect of closure, and in some cases the prospect became a reality in the broader interest of the community.

But one question remains: Given that a fair number of small town junior colleges did fail, does this justify in any way both Gray and Lange's criticism that many of these institutions were doomed to failure because they only served the interests of land speculators and other, crassly self-interested parties? A careful review of the record, as we have seen in the histories of several small town junior colleges, argues strongly that it would be

unfounded to extend this criticism to the motives of small town junior college proponents. Even where a small town junior college was clearly destined to fail, as was the case with Nebraska's Walthill Junior College, its proponents quickly acknowledged their error and immediately took reasonable and appropriate corrective action. Only one junior college of this type, in fact, stands out as an example of such overt manipulation of the public schools by civic boosters as to warrant condemnation. That Gray was aware of this junior college -- California's short-lived Le Grand Junior College -- suggests that he, and through him, Lange, may have unfairly generalized from this one institution. What a broad reading of the historical record suggests, instead, is that this one junior college is better understood as an extreme example of how public schools may be misused by land speculators and self-serving civic boosters on occasion, but that rarely does such abuse succeed. For the first part of this century, lone community factions, without the support of local alliances and unable to draw on state support, simply lacked the means and political capacity to override the interests of the larger community in building up school systems that did not reasonably serve the collective interest.

The history of California's Le Grand Junior College is an object lesson in the utter failure of such unmitigated over-reaching by a self-interested community clique. Situated in the southwestern corner of California's San Jauquin Valley, the town of Le Grand was the very sort of "booster" community that warranted the criticism of any right-thinking educator. While only organized at the outset of the twentieth century, the town's civic leaders presented their community to the larger world as being rich in opportunities and potential, despite its population of a few hundred.[1]

Following the well-worn path of civic development, and ever hopeful of attracting new residents and businesses, Le Grand's "leading men" set out to acquire the ornaments of civic life. A weekly newspaper, a high school with a competitive basketball team, and a volunteer fire department were all in place by 1912.[2] But Le

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[1] It is difficult to accurately gauge Le Grand's population, since the U.S. Census Bureau did not even consider it large enough to justify its separate designation. Le Grand Junior College, in fact, was the only public junior college established before 1940 whose sponsoring community was not recognized as a city, town, village, or place by the Census Bureau.

[2] It is interesting to note that both Auburn and Le Grand's newspapers encouraged the development of a competitive high school basketball team early in their schools' development. This attests to the low enrollments

Grand's civic leaders were not satisfied with such progress. By late 1912, and even as the finishing touches were being made to the grounds of Le Grand's new high school, the Le Grand Herald egged on the town's school board to extend its high school program to include college-level work, and then trumpeted the organization of a two-year "post graduate course" in late 1913.[41] The town's junior college was to be no simple undertaking. It would offer three full curricula -- academic, engineering, and industrial -- to Le Grand's young people.[42] Given that Le Grand's high school itself enrolled no more than a few dozen students and could claim less than a handful of graduates, it should come as no surprise that Le Grand's so-called junior college enrolled just nine students at its peak in 1915, of which only four survived the year.[43]

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at these schools -- a football team would have required at least twice as many athletes, even if a school were to field only a team of 7 or 9, as did some schools in the Midwest.

[41] "Post Graduate Course," Le Grand Advocate, 14 December 1912 and "High School Items," Le Grand Advocate, 12 April 1913.

[42] Le Grand Advocate, 12 April 1913.

[43] Le Grand Advocate, 5 June 1915. Gray gives an even lower enrollment figure for the junior college. He found that it enrolled only three students in 1915, and had enrolled a total of just four since its opening in 1913. See Gray, The Junior College, 122.

While mentioned in both Gray's and Brook's theses, and included in Wood's first list of California's junior colleges, the quick closure of what was, for all intents and purposes, Le Grand's sham junior college was virtually guaranteed. By 1916 there is no further mention of the institution in either local or state records.[43]

All the aspirations of this small town's civic leaders notwithstanding, the fate of their junior college, like that of their city itself, was simply outside of their control. Whatever hope Le Grand's civic leaders might have had that their efforts would succeed, and that the city would live up to its name, was effectively settled when California's highway department built the region's first state road through the competing community of Merced, by-passing Le Grand altogether. As population and wealth quickly migrated to the more accessible Merced, Le Grand eventually lost its newspaper, its hotel, and

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[43] That residents of Le Grand were not supportive of the attempts by civic leaders to build up their public schools is suggested by a brief article in the Advocate. This 1913 article took the unusual step for a "booster" newspaper of acknowledging that "Some unwarranted criticisms are being made about the lavish expenditure of moneys by the Le Grand Hi(sic) school during the past year." In fact, the criticism was warranted. As the report went on, it was hoped that 1914's high school enrollment would finally reach 75, only filing about half the capacity of the city's new high school. "High School Notes," Le Grand Advocate, 21 July 1913.

even, with the earthquake of 1954, its high school. For a small town well removed from an urban center, no effort by civic leaders, if not joined with other community interest groups, could counter generally adverse conditions, or, in Le Grand's case, the loss of highway access.

The Great City Junior College

Between 1880 and 1920, the number of America's "great" cities -- those with a population of at least 250,000 -- increased from just six to 25. William Rossiter, writing for the Census Bureau, found that "powerful forces were at work" contributing to the transformation of a once rural America into a nation of great urban centers.[4] The vitality of these new metropolises, Rossiter argued, could be attributed in part to the influence of the First World War, but equally to the transformation of the American economy from its earlier dependence upon farming and the extractive industries to one centered around industrial production. While overlooked by Rossiter, an the equally important force behind the increasing influence of these cities in shaping the very character of American life was their

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[4] William S. Rossiter, Increase of Population in the United States: 1910-1920, (Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census, 1922), 18.

dominance of education, communication, and the arts.

Indeed, by the early part of this century, a community's claim to metropolitan status could not rest solely upon mere population, the diversity and vitality of its commerce, or its role as a major transportation hub. Additionally, a great city was not only expected to exhibit the ususal array of marble-fronted public buildings, but to grid its streets, to ring its residential neighborhoods with public parks, and to link its residential, commercial, and industrial quarters through a network of public transportation. Yet no less essential to any community's claim of metropolitan status was a community's willingness to sponsor a full range of cultural institutions: from museums and a symphony, to an art gallery and opera company, and, for the most ambitious, a world's fair or exposition.[4]

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[4] Especially west of the Appalachians, Chicago provided the model for other cities that aspired to full metropolitan status. The echo of developments in Chicago can be seen in Kansas City, Missouri, both with its park system and its organization of an early public fine arts center, and in San Diego, with its willingness to embrace entirely new and distinctive architectural forms and its support world's exposition. The transformation of "Chaotic Chicago" into the great city of "a magnificent chain of parks and boulevards, one of the best sewage and water-supply systems in the world,...and a splendid complex of cultural and civic buildings along its downtown lakefront," and, in the process, its becoming the guide for other aspirants to the status of a world class city,

By the opening of the twentieth century, a university intra murae had been joined in public expectations to a library and museum as integral to a great city's constellation of cultural institutions. Moreover, the importance of a university to the vitality of a great city was not solely motivated by considerations of civic pride. From 1890 onward, urban leaders recognized that a proximate university was central to ensuring that America's increasingly integrated and industrialized economy, centered in their cities, would have ready access to a professional workforce, adequately schooled and appropriately credentialed.[9]

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is brilliantly described in Donald L. Miller, City of the Century (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), 19.

[9] "University" aspirations were not limited to the leaders of great cities. Some municipal civic leaders looked upon their junior college as nothing more than a stepping stone to a university, even where the community's school board and school officials were satisfied with the status quo. Sacramento, California provides a case in point. The city's school superintendent, J.B. Lillard, was a leading figure in the national two-year college movement, serving as the first Californian to head the AAJC. But the city's boosters saw their junior college as nothing less than a surrogate university, and from the description below, which appeared in a 1928 editorial advocating support for the junior college, it is apparent that they had every hope of someday building their surrogate into a true university:

> [The junior college] means much to our city, social, and business life. Such constructive projects as the new stadium have been responsible for developing the college, giving

For some of the nation's oldest cities -- among them Philadelphia, New York, Providence, and Boston -- this need for a proximate university could be met through the reorganization of a seventeenth or eighteenth century college. Yet in many of the great cities that did not emerge as true urban centers until the second half of the nineteenth century -- notably Chicago, Detroit, Newark, Los Angeles, and Atlanta -- no antebellum college was available to serve as the foundation of a modern university. These cities were faced with the very real challenge of meeting the needs of expanding enterprises for an ever-growing number of engineers, teachers, and formally trained businessmen through a poorly articulated and loosely regulated array of proprietary schools, institutes, and academies.

Complicating matters for the great cities that emerged in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was antebellum America's preference to place colleges in rural settings, far removed from the temptations of urban life. This inclination, whatever its

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it the facilities, prestige, and spirit of a full-fledged university. Every Sacramentan should be a junior college booster.
Quoted in The School Executive Magazine, 29 (December, 1928): 171.

rationale, left Baltimore, Detroit, and Los Angeles, among other great cities, without proximate higher education of any real sort, much less a university. But the organization of a university was a complex and expensive undertaking that posed a substantial challenge for these communities. Some, notably Chicago, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and Atlanta -- were indeed fortunate, being aided in overcoming this challenge with the aid of an extraordinary outpouring of individual philanthropy.

The extent to which some urban philanthropists were willing to go in aiding an aspiring city could be remarkable. Atlanta's acquisition of Emory University presents a good case in point. Before 1915, as David O. Levine has observed, "for all practical purposes, Atlanta was an educational desert."[44] While there had been some early agitation among city leaders to provide something more than the technical institutes, women's colleges, and proprietary schools that then made up "higher" education in Atlanta, it wasn't until 1915 that real progress was made toward providing southeastern America's leading city with a first class university. That year Asa G. Candler pledged $1 million of his Coca-Cola fortune to assemble

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[44] Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 79.

Emory University under Episcopal auspices. Seeming to care more for immediate results than for the gradual evolution of a distinctive and vital university culture, Candler and his supporters used their money and positions of power within the community and the Episcopal church to quickly assemble their university from a rag-tag collection of institutions, including a small, struggling denominational college and nondescript proprietary schools of law and medicine.

While Atlanta's good fortune in securing a major university virtually overnight was in no sense unprecedented -- one immediately thinks of the University of Chicago, but New Jersey's Rutgers University was also

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One must be careful not to overstate the seeming differences between civic leaders in America's small and great cities. One can observe a number of striking similarities between the San Mateo's Kirkbride and Atlanta's Asa Candler. Beyond their common interest in higher education, both were active in politics (Kirkbride as a city attorney and elected school trustee, Candler as mayor of Atlanta) and in business (Kirkbride as publisher, land developer, and lawyer; Candler as head of Coca-Cola.) On a more personal level, both were deeply religious and active in their respective churches, and both were proud of their family names. They differed, it seems, solely with respect to scale. Where Candler was a true cosmopolitan, as much at home in New York as in Atlanta, Kirkbride was a parochial, apparently content to live out his life in his adopted city, except for regular visits to San Francisco's Commonwealth Club and a term on the governing board of Stockton, California's College of the Pacific.

assembled from a number of once independent schools, colleges, and institutes with the aid of public and private funds -- not every great city was so fortunate. For many great cities the need for proximate higher education could not be met by the secularization and professionalization of a colonial college or through the fortunate intervention of a wealthy benefactor. For this third group of great cities, the only available option rested with the public junior college -- not as an end in itself, but as a step in an incremental plan leading to the creation of a municipal university. It will be cities in this difficult situation -- typified by Newark, but including Detroit, Houston, and Los Angeles -- that will be the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

1. Newark and Its Junior College

One of the newest of twentieth century America's great cities, Newark, New Jersey, was particularly frustrated in its efforts to secure a municipal university. While settled in the seventeenth century, and a major industrial center by the nineteenth century, Newark did not emerge as a true metropolitan center until the first two decades of the twentieth century.

Between 1900 and 1920, public and private sectors moved with a remarkable dispatch to transform what had

been, as late as 1890, a city "on the edge of chaos."[1] Home to seemingly unending waves of immigrants, Newark was best known for its unregulated industry, disease, unpaved streets, polluted water, and overcrowded schools. But building on the success of mayor Joseph Haynes's remarkable success in bringing pure water to Newark in 1892, the city's civic leaders of the early twentieth century moved with an incredible dispatch to see "[r]ambling three or four-story brick buildings [give] way to tall, slim giants of granite or limestone."[2] In short order, Newark replaced its Civil War-era city hall with a domed marble edifice in 1906, added an equally impressive court house in 1907, and then complemented the pair with an imposing public library. These structures were followed in 1910 by Newark's first skyscraper, the sixteen-story home to the Fireman's Insurance Company, followed just two years later by the twelve-story Kinney Building. Newark's continued development as the major urban center for northern New Jersey was assured by its proximity to New

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[1] According to the 1890 US Census, Newark had the highest death rate among all cities with a population of more than 100,000. A substantial portion of these deaths were among children less than 2 years of age. John T. Cunningham, Newark, (Newark, NJ: The New Jersey Historical Society, 1966), 230.

[2] Cunningham, Newark, 232.

York City, its control of a major port, excellent rail service, and the nearby construction of major oil refineries and chemical plants.

But in one area, higher education, Newark was slow to progress. Like Detroit and other large cities that emerged in the decades after the Civil War, Newark lacked a proximate college to convert into a university capable of preparing the skilled professionals needed to manage its expanding commercial economy, its growing school system, and its increasingly complex public services. However, unlike Atlanta, Newark was not an "educational desert," being home to a number of well-regarded private technical institutes and colleges of law and pharmacy. However, no institution located within the city offered a standard baccalaureate program, and the city's professional schools were, following the national trend, increasingly demanding a minimum of two years of basic undergraduate work as prerequisite to admission. In the absence of a proximate college, graduates of Newark's growing system of public high schools found themselves effectively barred from attending any of their own city's professional schools without first spending two years away at one of their region's private colleges. Newark's high school graduates did not even have the option, as did their counterparts in

Philadelphia, of attending a tuition-free state university. Without ready access to at least the first two years of a conventional college education, those Newark high school graduates unable or unwilling to relocate for two years of undergraduate work faced the very real prospect of being excluded from Newark's emerging managerial class at a time of rapid growth and expanding opportunities.

By 1900, Newark's school commissioners and superintendent were well aware that their city was failing its youth and diminishing the future prospects of their city by failing to provide at least the rudiments of a higher education, and during the first two decades of this century these leaders proved remarkably creative in using existing institutions to experiment with new approaches to correct this deficiency.[1] Initially, these efforts had a decidedly ad hoc quality, reflecting a tendency to address specific and immediate civic needs with the means at hand. But within just twenty years, David Corson, Newark's

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[1] The Newark public school system, much like Detroit's and St. Louis's, had a well-deserved reputation for innovation. In 1885 -- more than a decade before New York City followed suit -- Newark's public schools established a six-week summer program to keep otherwise idle youth off city streets. See McKelvey, The Urbanization of America, 177.

school superintendent, very nearly succeeded in uniting his city's hodgepodge of schooling institutions -- both public and private -- into a single, highly integrated and comprehensive urban school system which extended from kindergarten through professional school. What distinguished Corson's system was not its reach -- Detroit's public schools achieved a comparable degree of vertical integration -- but that it relied upon a public junior college as its linchpin.

The Newark school system's first major step in the process of system-building came at the opening of the twentieth century. Newark school officials were concerned that their city's high school teachers who wished to take advanced courses were required to travel across the Hudson to either New York or Columbia Universities. Such travel, these officials noted, came at considerable personal cost and inconvenience and likely reduced the number of teachers who pursued additional education. In 1906, Newark's school officials moved to correct this situation by contracting with New York University to offer a small number of courses in Newark. The program was apparently well received by Newark teachers, with professors from Columbia joining the Newark program in 1907. By 1910, management of the program required the appointment of a

full-time administrator, which in turn led to the program's incorporation as the Newark Institute of Arts and Sciences.

Corson and other Newark school officials knew full well that their Institute was not itself a college, for it lacked legal authority to award the baccalaureate. But they did see the Institute as the nucleus of a municipal university.[1] In his 1917-1918 school report, Corson outlined his vision for the Institute and its role in bringing about a fully articulated schooling system in Newark. As represented by Carson, the Institute would provide a framework through which a number of the city's professional schools -- the New Jersey College of Law, the Newark Technical School, and the College of Pharmacy -- could be federated and then articulated with the public schools. But Carson also knew that the long term success of this federation would depend upon the addition of a third institution. In keeping with the national trend, Newark's professional schools now required their applicants to present between one and two years of a traditional undergraduate education for admission. The

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[1] David Corson, "Report of the Superintendent," in Combined Sixty-Third and Sixty-Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Education of Newark, New Jersey (Newark: 1920), 106.

Institute, because it did not offer conventional undergraduate coursework, was unable to provide this essential bridge between Newark's public high schools and its professional schools. As Corson realized, Newark required a junior college to bridge this gap.

It was within the context of an evolving city-wide school system that Newark's school commissioners authorized the establishment of Newark Junior College in the Fall of 1918. Opened at the city's South Side High School, the junior college was established "without university initiative or encouragement," instead being designed to serve two ends, one strategic and the other immediate.[11] In time, the junior college was to be "a stimulus which will eventually cause the development of a university in Newark," bringing "the city nearer the goal, namely that of being a great educational center." But from the very start, as is evident from the diagram prepared by Corson for the city's School Commissioners (figure 2), the junior college was to provide a bridge between the city's increasingly comprehensive high schools and, at the apex of the city's educational system, an array of professional

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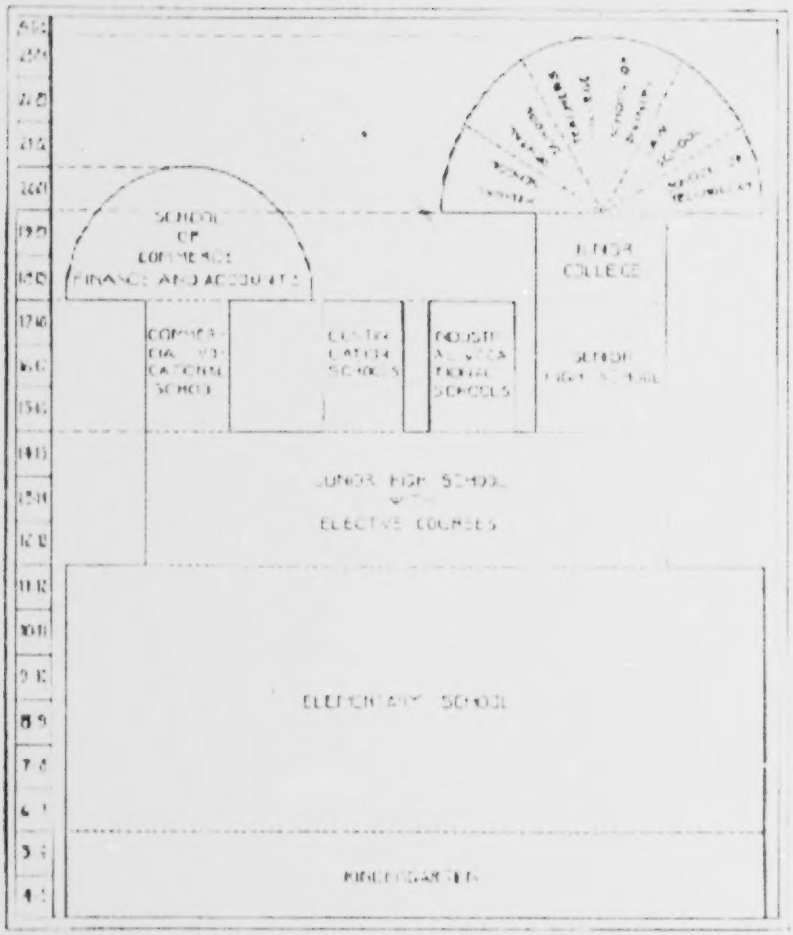
[11] David Corson, "Report of the Superintendent," in The Sixty-First and Sixty-Second Annual Report of the Board of Education of Newark, New Jersey, (Newark, NJ: 1918), 148

schools. As represented by Corson, Newark was to offer its residents an entirely practical school system, designed to prepare the professionals and skilled workers required by Newark's rapidly expanding industrial and commercial enterprises. The development of a full-fledged university, with an undergraduate college offering the baccalaureate, may have been the ultimate goal, but the immediate needs of a growing urban center had to be met first.

For both Corson and his school board, Newark Junior College was conceived from the outset as a means to achieve a number of specific objectives particular to Newark. Its organizers never viewed the institution as an end in itself or as part of some larger national movement

Fig. 2
Diagram of a Vertically Integrated School System,
Newark, New Jersey, 1918



toward the "democratization" of higher education. Strategically, their junior college was to serve as the linchpin of a fully integrated and comprehensive schooling

system, encompassing elementary through professional education. More immediately, the junior college not only could provide the school system's growing number of postgraduates with the opportunity to acquire transferable credit prior to entering a traditional college, it could assist other graduates in securing the courses for admission to one of the city's many professional schools without having to leave home.[1]

Ironically, it was also the parochial nature of Newark Junior College that led to its early closure. Full realization of Corson's vision depended on the relocation of the junior college from its original home at Newark's South Side High School to its own, more adequate facility. From Corson's perspective, only when the junior college was fully separated from the high school and permitted to

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[1]According to Corson, Newark's "postgraduate problem" stemmed from the fact that a good number of Newark's high school students took their diplomas in February, at the end of the first semester of their senior year, and then, because colleges would not admit them until the next Fall, returned to the city's high schools as postgraduates for the spring semester. The work done by these students during this extra semester did not earn them college credit, and so did them little practical good, while costing the school system dearly. The similarities between this problem and the postgraduate problem faced by the Kansas City School Board is worth noting, as was the decision in both cities to use a junior college to resolve matters. Corson, "Combined Sixty-Third and Sixty-Fourth Annual Report," 102.

develop a distinctively collegiate climate could it begin to be taken seriously as the nucleus of a true municipal university. But the cost of this move, estimated at $175,000 for the facility alone, was apparently too great for Newark's voters. In 1922, the voters turned out the old board of school commissioners, which had supported Corson's plan, and elected commissioners with little interest in system-building. At their first meeting, the new commissioners brought any discussion of a separate junior college building to an abrupt end by closing the junior college.

There was a widespread concern among schoolmen of this period that the continued sharing of facilities by high schools and public junior colleges was detrimental to the junior college developing, as Charles E. Prall observed in 1930, that "atmosphere of distinction that a college of this type ought to have," and of establishing "an institution definitely superior to the regular high school." However, as a practical matter most junior colleges could not afford their own campus. In one study, cited by Prall, 29 of the 30 public junior colleges examined from six Midwestern states shared facilities with their sponsoring high schools, and most did not even enjoy a separate floor or wing. Had any of these junior colleges secured its own campus, its capital costs (which were typically apportioned to the sponsoring high school) would have raised its per-student costs beyond the means of tuition-paying students and likely invoked the opposition of taxpayers. See Prall, "Report of the Junior College Survey Committee,"19.

Newark's New Jersey Law School, a private institution, responded to the loss of its primary feeder college by establishing Dana College, a private junior college. New Jersey Law School and Dana College formed the

Newark was not alone among the great cities in looking upon the public junior college as an interim phase in a long-term strategy to secure a municipal university.[*] Detroit's school system was especially forthright in its intention to use a public junior college for just this purpose, and spent many years in successfully laying the foundation for a municipal university. For some time before 1913, the Detroit school board had operated a postgraduate program in conjunction with its high school. By 1915, this program had grown large enough to support a full complement of freshmen-

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nucleus of what would eventually become the Newark branch of Rutgers University. Sammartino, A History of Higher Education in New Jersey, 159.

[*] Koos, for one, was especially concerned with this trend, arguing against the transformation of junior colleges into municipal universities. As he wrote:

> This movement to extend upward is at work on the junior college in certain communities. This has often been stimulated by the "booster" spirit which would like to be in a position to boast that "we have a four-year college in our city."

Koos, "Progress and Problems of the Junior College," 4-17. However, P.P. Claxton, during his tenure as U.S. Commissioner of Education, disagreed with Koos, describing the "upward extension" of junior colleges into universities by larger cities as "the direction of the trend to-day, a trend that will be encouraged." P.P. Claxton, Better Organization of Higher Education in the United States, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, no. 19 (Washington, DC: 1922), 22.

level courses. In 1917, the school board took advantage of recently adopted state legislation and added a second year of study to its postgraduate curriculum, formally designating this new program as Detroit Junior College.[a]

In describing the purposes of its new junior college, Detroit's school officials mentioned neither the transfer function, where Detroit's junior college's graduates would have gone on to either the University of Michigan or Chicago for the baccalaureate, nor the preparation of students for low-prestige technical or semi-professional careers. Like its counterpart in Newark, Detroit Junior College was to serve two ends: it was to facilitate the access of Detroit's high school graduates to the city's professional schools, including the school system's own medical college, while, more broadly, building public support for a comprehensive municipal university. Also like Newark, Detroit's school officials did not mask their larger purposes. In announcing the opening of the junior college, the Detroit school board quite openly stated that it was to be "a source of educational interest and the

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[a] The upward extension of the Detroit public schools, which culminated in the establishment of Wayne State University, is summarized in R. H. Eckelberry, History of the Municipal University in the United States, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, no. 2 (Washington, DC: 1932), 138-41.

nucleus of a municipal university."[6]

However, unlike Newark's failed junior college, Detroit Junior College enjoyed broad community support from the outset, and in the process became the nation's first public junior college to enroll more than 1,000 students. On the eve of America's entrance to the First World War, Detroit Junior College reported a fall enrollment of nearly 700 students, and by 1922 its enrollment had grown to 1,227 -- nearly double the enrollment at Chicago's Crane Junior College and more than the combined enrollment of all public junior colleges in Iowa, Kansas, and Minnesota.

As dean of the nation's largest junior college, Detroit's David MacKenzie assumed a highly visible

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[6] David O. Levine's characterization of Detroit Junior College and its purposes is simply not substantiated by the sources. The diversion of students away from the learned professions could not have been a purpose of Detroit's junior college, since the school board's own medical college was dependent upon the junior college to provide it with suitably prepared applicants. The Detroit school board was explicit that its purpose in establishing a junior college was to open the way for a standard college. While MacKenzie did see the need for some two-year colleges to offer terminal, vocational programs, he viewed such colleges as fundamentally different from the "true" junior college and maintained that they should be operated separately. For MacKenzie, the underlying purpose of Detroit's junior college was not diversion, but as a complement to system-building. See Levine, The American College and the Culture of Aspiration, 84-85.

leadership role in the general promotion of the junior college and in bringing about the formation of the American Association of Junior Colleges (AAJC).[1] MacKenzie not only attended the St. Louis conference that led to the organization of the AAJC, he subsequently served a year's term as the Association's president. But Detroit's success as a junior college, and MacKenzie's prominence among the junior college's national leadership, did not deter the city from its original plan. In 1923 Detroit's school board secured the necessary legislative authorization and promptly converted its junior college into a 4-year college -- the predecessor of today's Wayne State University.[2] Having served its purpose, what was certainly America's most successful early junior college gave way to its sponsors' ultimate goal: a municipal university.

Admittedly, the fact that some urban junior colleges were essentially Trojan horses, intended to lay open the

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[1] Robert Pedersen, "The St. Louis Conference," Community College Journal 65, no. 5: 30.

[2] Michigan Public Acts 1923, no. 138, 199. This act reduced to 25,000 the minimum population of a school district that was eligible to establish a junior college, while allowing school districts with a population of more than 250,000 -- effectively only Detroit's public schools -- to offer a full 4-year college program.

way for public acceptance of a municipal university, does not, in itself, rule out the possibility that their organizers were ideologically motivated. We must be open to the possibility that urban school leaders such as Corson and MacKenzie only differed from Koos and Eells in their belief that the democratization of higher education in a great city was better achieved through a municipal university than through a junior college.

With respect to Corson, as we have already noted, Newark's school superintendent rejected any notion that some ideological consideration was at the heart of his city's decision to open a junior college. His proposal to establish Newark Junior College was in response to a range of fundamentally pragmatic, local concerns. In this sense, comparisons with the situation in Kansas City seem appropriate. Corson's intent to promote a greater degree of integration within his city's school system recalls the desire of Kansas City's school board to use their junior college to preserve their carefully planned-out, nationally-recognized, and cost-effective 11-year primary and secondary curriculum.

But MacKenzie appears, at least on the surface, to have been more forthrightly ideological in his motivations than his Newark colleague. From a reading of his many

speeches and publications, it is apparent that Detroit's Dean MacKenzie justified his city's junior college and its desire to establish a municipal university with essentially the same egalitarian rhetoric favored by Koos and Eells. It was, in fact, MacKenzie who coined the term "community college" to describe and advocate for a two-year college that would be open to the "class of fairly intelligent and truly aspiring men and women, who, unable to meet the typical college-entrance requirements, can with profit...pursue many college courses." It was likewise MacKenzie who asserted, with equal conviction that "Municipalities owe the privilege of higher education to all of its citizens who desire it."[44]

And MacKenzie, much to the consternation of his fellow public junior college leaders, was very much a man of his word. Not only was Detroit Junior College tuition-free, but it took the extraordinary step of eliminating the strict admissions requirements common to virtually all public junior colleges of this period. MacKenzie recognized that a significant barrier to college attendance was the requirement of an academic diploma,

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[44] David MacKenzie, Problems of the Public Junior College, Bureau of Education, Bulletin, no. 19, (Washington, DC: 1922), 35.

something earned by fewer than 20 percent of all 17-year-olds in the early 1920s and even fewer in Detroit, with its large population of recent immigrants from Eastern Europe and the South. In what appears to have been an unprecedented step, and one whose purposes could easily be interpreted as truly egalitarian, Detroit Junior College admitted a great many students who had not even earned a high school diploma, much less completed the standard prerequisite of 15 academic units.[55]

But a closer reading of MacKenzie's public comments on his college's unprecedented admission policy makes clear that Detroit Junior College's purpose in eliminating traditional academic barriers to higher education was far from progressive. According to MacKenzie, Detroit was threatened by the mindless radicalism of recent immigrants, and an accessible junior college was a critical weapon in countering the threat their radicalism posed to American life and institutions. At the St. Louis

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[55] Detroit Junior College's elimination of the high school diploma as an admissions prerequisite appears to have been a matter of some concern among contemporaries, but it was one of the reasons why, with 600 students, the school quickly became the nation's largest public junior college. See Professor Hill's rejoinder to MacKenzie, counseling strict admissions standards because "a new institution must sometimes lean over backwards." MacKenzie, Problems of the Public Junior College, 37.

conference of 1921, MacKenzie answered those of his colleagues who questioned his school's "open door" policy with the argument that it permitted his college to admit recent immigrants infected with a "destructive radicalism."[] It was his hope and expectation that attendance at Detroit Junior College, through its "liberalizing and stabilizing effects," would transform these youthful radicals into living examples of American civic virtue. As the driving force behind the success of Detroit Junior College, MacKenzie may well have been ideological in his motives, but it was a decidedly conservative, not egalitarian, ideology.

2. Opposition to the Urban Junior College

Although MacKenzie's representation of Detroit Junior College as a bulwark against radicalism may have won support among Detroit's civic leadership, this rationale proved no more successful in securing support for big city junior colleges than Koos's more conventionally egalitarian rhetoric swayed public opinion in America's small cities and towns.[] Before 1940, except in those

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[] MacKenzie, Problems of the Public Junior College, 35

[] Essentially the same argument as MacKenzie's was raised by Chicago's J. Leonard Hancock when, in 1932, the bankrupt Chicago school board considered closing Crane

instances were a junior college was the means to a higher end, only a handful of America's larger cities even considered establishing a junior college, and in many of these cities a proposed junior college was met more by indifference and suspicion than enthusiasm. In some larger cities, limited resources and rapidly growing high school enrollments simply precluded the creation of a new institution, whatever its merits. In other cities, the junior college would be rejected by school and municipal officials as simply a ploy by self-interested community elites to secure a college education for their children at public expense.

The unwillingness of big city leaders to accept the junior college as a reasonable and appropriate extension of the public school system was typified in the response of Philadelphia's Board of Public Education to the requests by Robert Ellis Thompson, president of Philadelphia's prestigious Central High School, to append a junior college to his school. As was briefly noted in

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Junior College. Hancock extolled the value of the urban junior college as the best means to change the views of "avowed Reds" and other radicals. This argument was no more successful than the many others raised on behalf of Crane, which was closed for a year. See Leonard J. Hancock, "Does the Junior College Make Good Citizens?" Junior College Journal 4, no 5 (February 1934): 225-227.

the first chapter, between 1904 and 1912 Thompson repeatedly petitioned the board to establish a junior college as a department of Philadelphia's Central High School.[**] The cornerstone of Thompson's argument was an early formulation of the democratization rhetoric that would be subsequently popularized in the writings of Koos and Eells. The poorer students of Philadelphia, Thompson argued, could afford neither the tuition of Philadelphia's own University of Pennsylvania nor the expense of living away at Pennsylvania's distant state university, and scholarships offered by other universities were few. Without the addition of a junior college, the great academic promise these students had demonstrated while at Central would go unfilled, at great loss to both the individual students and to the city. At a minimum, Thompson claimed, a public junior college would enable Philadelphia to provide their capable but poor high school graduates with the same opportunities then available to their counterparts in New York City at the tuition-free City College.

[**] See, for example, Philadelphia Board of Public Education, Eighty-Fifth Annual Report (Philadelphia: 1904), 28-29; Philadelphia Board of Public Education, Ninetieth Annual Report (Philadelphia, 1909), 128-129; and Philadelphia Board of Public Education, Ninety-Third Annual Report (Philadelphia, 1912), 160-161.

While Thompson's argument appears to place him on the side of that rhetoric of democratization associated for much of this century with advocates of the public two-year college, it would be wrong to infer that the Philadelphia's school board rejection of Thompson's pleas sprang from some anti-democratic sentiment. To the contrary, Philadelphia's school board was faced with a fairly straightforward policy choice. They could use some of their funding to provide a relatively few youth with access to a very limited form of higher education or devote all of their resources to an expansion of the city's high school system from just one school -- Thompson's Central -- to four. The commissioners opted to extend schooling access as broadly as possible through high school expansion.

In nearby Baltimore, the response to the junior college was much as it was in Philadelphia.[*] Before 1940, several public officials proposed the establishment of a junior college in Baltimore. As in Philadelphia, all were

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[*] This discussion of resistance to the junior college in Baltimore under Mayors Broening and Jackson draws extensively upon the research of Ralf Rodney Fields. See Ralf Rodney Fields, "A Case Study of major Educational Changes in a Two-Year College: The Democratization of Baltimore Junior College," (Ed.D. diss., Teachers College, Columbia University, 1971), 78-82.

rejected on the grounds that a junior college was not so much "democracy's college" as a means by which the interests of a privileged few could be advanced at the cost of the many. The first of these proposals was advanced in 1927. The proposition, which called for the upward extension of Baltimore's prestigious City College High School, was quickly opposed by Baltimore's popular mayor, William Broening. According to reports in the Baltimore Sun, the mayor not only felt that the college's estimated annual cost of $100,000 was excessive, he also believed that it would be wrong to support a junior college from public funds, since it would only benefit the children of affluent city residents.

A second proposal to establish a junior college in Baltimore was made in 1929. That year a city councilman by the name of Albrect recommended an addition of $125,000 to the school system's budget to fund a junior college department as part of City College High. Newspaper accounts suggest that Albrect's motives may have been less public spirited than self-interested, for they note that his son had experienced some difficulty in securing the two years of collegiate instruction required for admission to the University of Maryland's law school. A local public junior college, the Baltimore Sun hinted, was a

public solution to a private dilemma.

That the Baltimore Sun may have unfairly maligned Albrecht's motives is suggested by the fact that the councilman's proposal won the support of Baltimore's powerful and respected school superintendent, David Weglein. But Weglein's support notwithstanding, the junior college proposal was opposed by Council President Bryant and Mayor Henry W. Jackson. Together, these two held a majority of the votes on Baltimore's all-powerful City Board of Estimates. Recalling the position of Mayor Broening, both Bryant and Jackson condemned a city-sponsored junior college as a benefit that would go to only a "preferred few," and their control of the Board of Estimates ensured the failure of Albrect's proposal. It would not be until 1934 that Baltimore's public school system at last opened two junior colleges, one for "whites only" and the other for African Americans, and then only because it secured full funding for both schools through a Federal Emergency Relief Administration grant.[11] When,

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[11] Robert Pedersen, The Forest Park Junior College Center: Maryland's First Public Junior College, ERIC ED 282 606 (1987). Among other junior colleges supported by the Federal Emergency Relief Administration would were six county-sponsored junior colleges in New Jersey, one of which survives to this day as the four-year, private Union College. The most unusual of the F.E.R.A. projects was likely "The Ohio Emergency Junior Radio College,"

just two years later, more stringent federal aid regulations ended the federal subsidy of the city's junior colleges, both were quickly closed by the Baltimore school commissioners. A permanent junior college would not be established in Baltimore until 1946, and then only after the Maryland legislature authorized a substantial level of state aid for locally-sponsored junior colleges.

3. Pragmatism and the Urban Junior College

Any explanation of the great city junior college must look first to the influence of pragmatic self-interest and not ideology. Whether in Los Angeles, Newark, or Detroit, the junior college did not derive support from any deeply held ideological conviction, nor did it gain strength from some widely-shared reformist zeal. In these and other large cities, a junior college was not an end in itself. For its advocates, it was the best available means to achieve some specific and immediate policy goal, most often a municipal university. To its detractors, it represented a potential drain on scarce public funds

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organized in January, 1934, and which enrolled almost 1,800 students at its height, offering instruction over the airwaves in such disciplines as French, political science, and psychology. For a history of Union College, see Donald R. Raichle, New Jersey's Union College, (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1983). For a brief description of Ohio's radio college, see "Junior College Radio," Junior College Journal, 5, no. 4: 176.

better spent on the expansion of cash-strapped public high schools.

Certainly the most striking example of this urban pragmatism can be found in the much-belated 1935 decision of San Francisco's school board to establish a junior college upon the recommendation of superintendent Edwin A Lee.[71] San Francisco Junior College was certainly a late-comer to California's two-year college "movement," being organized more than a decade after a number of junior colleges had been established in the Bay Area's rapidly growing suburban communities. While there is some evidence of advocacy for a junior college in San Francisco as early as 1924 by "civic clubs, women's organizations, part-teacher groups and parents of approximately 975 students per year forced to attend junior colleges in San Mateo, Marin, or eight other California counties," no proposal excited any great enthusiasm among civic or school leaders until the mid-1930s.[72] After all, a junior college would

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[71] San Francisco Public Schools, Report of the Superintendent (San Francisco: June, 1936), 4.

[72] San Francisco Public Schools, Report of the Superintendent: 81. An argument on behalf of a public junior college for San Francisco appeared in School Executives Magazine in 1929. See "Junior College In California," School Executives Magazine, 48 (January 1929): 215. The brief article, that summarized a talk by San Francisco's Deputy Superintendent J.C. McGlade, laid

have been costly for San Francisco – the state's Junior College Fund having already been depleted -- its high school facilities were already fully utilized, and the city's relatively small number of high school graduates could either attend one of the city's denominational colleges or take a brief ferry ride to the University of California.

In failing to establish a junior college, San Francisco did put itself at something of a disadvantage in the competition for new residents with those suburban communities, like San Mateo, that could advertise a proximate, tuition-free college. But this disadvantage was difficult to measure, while the cost of establishing a junior college -- which had the potential of enrolling 2,500 students -- represented a major expense for a community that was already having great difficulty adequately housing its mandatory high school program and whose superintendent was pressing for the completion of the Agassiz School, the city's first vocational high school.[1] However, a provision of California's 1921 Junior

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out the financial argument that Edwin Lee would use in 1935 to persuade a reluctant city to establish a junior college.

[1] The cost-conscious San Francisco board of education was, in fact, quite reasonable in its reluctance

College Act eventually compelled San Francisco to take on the expense of a junior college. Under this provision, a student who resided in a school district that did not sponsor a junior college was free to enroll in any of the state's public junior colleges. While this out-of-district student had to bear any travel expenses incurred in commuting to the junior college of his or her choice, it fell to the student's home school district to reimburse the student's junior college for any costs of instruction. As early as 1929, San Francisco's Deputy Superintendent J.C. McGlade was concerned that the 115 San Franciscans then attending the College of San Mateo were costing his district nearly $20,000 a year. By 1935, the number of San Franciscans enrolled in San Mateo, Santa Rosa, and the other junior colleges surrounding the city had increased to nearly 1,000, and San Francisco's school board came to the difficult conclusion that its mandatory payments to these colleges simply exceeded the cost of operating its own junior college. With little discussion, and less fanfare, the San Francisco school board avoided taking the

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to embrace a junior college. At the same time that it was being forced to reassess its opposition to sponsoring a junior college, San Francisco's school board was not only under pressure to fully fund the Agassiz School, but had to grapple with declining property tax revenue and uncertain state aid.

matter to its voters and, relying upon the state's 1917 Junior College Act, opened a public junior college under the departmental plan, using space borrowed from the University of California's Powell Street extension center.[74] A publicly-supported junior college did not finally come to San Francisco as part of some egalitarian commitment to extend opportunity to the city's disadvantaged or to free the University of California of unwanted freshmen. The decision simply followed from a pragmatic assessment of the San Francisco school system's economic self-interest.[75]

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[74] San Francisco School Board, Report of the Superintendent, 82.

[75] From the junior college's opening in 1935, school superintendent Lee sought out every possible avenue to limit its direct costs, eliminate tuition reimbursements to those surrounding counties, such as San Mateo, that had been enrolling San Franciscans, and induce out-of-district students to enroll in his city's new junior college. Rather than proposing a campus, which he estimated would cost approximately $50,000, Lee arranged for the junior college to use of the University of California's extension center during the day and Galileo High School between the hours of 2:30 and 8:00 P.M.. Additionally, he sought to limit faculty costs by reaching an agreement with the University of California, Stanford, and the University of Southern California to employ students in their education departments as "so-called 'internes' of [the junior college's] instructional staff" on a half-time basis at the nominal cost of $100 per unit of instruction. Lee also succeeded in gaining board approval to discontinue tuition reimbursements to surrounding school districts even as he negotiated with several, unnamed East Bay school districts to enroll their junior college-eligible students in the

Indeed, it is the same pragmatism exemplified by San Francisco's school board that also helps to explain the frequency with which urban junior colleges were closed or converted into standard colleges and municipal universities. When faced with the opportunity to see their civic aspirations fully realized, as occurred in Los Angeles in 1922 and Detroit in 1924, an urban school board was quick to exchange its junior college for a university. When a junior college's costs exceeded any perceived benefit, as happened in Newark in 1922 and Baltimore in 1936, it was simply closed. And when faced with a severe budget crisis, as occurred in Chicago in 1933, a city school board showed no hesitancy in determining that its junior college was a luxury, rationalizing the school's closure on the grounds that the savings which resulted would help to preserve mandated elementary and secondary programs.

Summary

Unlike the better known municipal junior colleges, the lot of junior colleges established by small towns and great cities was invariably difficult. For the junior colleges of Holton, Kansas, Cloquet, Minnesota, and

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hope of gaining some $50,000 of additional revenue.

Newark, New Jersey, fate did not always mete out the increasing enrollment, ever-expanding mission, and growing public support enjoyed by many municipal junior colleges. The success of the junior colleges of San Mateo and Temple was balanced by the failure of the junior colleges of Walthill and Holton, Chicago and Newark. With only one clear exception, in neither small towns nor great cities do we find evidence of that unqualified boosterism which provided municipal junior colleges with their initial impetus. In the case of small towns, the immediate impetus behind the opening of a junior college was most often the concerns of parents, faced with the unwelcome prospect of sending their children away to distant and forbidding universities, occasionally leavened by the threat to a town's regional standing that invariably followed the unexpected loss of a private college or normal school. For the great cities, a junior college was most often nothing more than an interim measure, a first step in a long-term plan to create a comprehensive municipal university. In Newark, just such a plan failed, but in Detroit, Los Angeles, and Houston, it succeeded. If the public junior college of all three types share one common feature, it is that only rarely were they their community's preferred choice. They were, instead, the best available option

given the resources and alternatives at hand at the time they were established.

Chapter V

The Public Junior College and Its Opponents

Introduction

For Koos, Eells, and the junior college's other nationally-prominent advocates, the institution's widespread replication was yet one more sign of the predestined democratization of American education. As the editor of School Review wrote in 1921:

> ...the junior college is here as one of those inevitable reorganizations of our educational system which expresses the determination of the American people to make higher education easily accessible to all kinds of young people.[1]

At the same time, none of these junior college proponents expected that their new institution would realize its destiny as the "people's college" without conflict or controversy. As Doak Campbell observed, "in education as in other aspects of our development, conflicts were inevitable."[2] But for Campbell and others of like mind,

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[1] "College and Junior Colleges," School Review 29 (March 1921): 165.

[2] Doak S. Campbell, "Retrospect and Prospect, Junior College Journal 8 (1939): 440. See also, from the same issue of the Journal, Jessie B. Davis, "Looking Backward

these obstacles were simply inconsequential. The triumph of educational reform over the resistance of a few unrepentant oligarches, the unenlightened, and the parsimonious was an unshakeable tenant of faith.

But was this faith warranted? Does the historical record confirm that the opponents of the junior college were nothing more than a few social reactionaries -- men powerless before the forces of progress and democratization? In this chapter, we will present evidence that leads us to view opposition to the junior college in a very different light. This evidence will show that school historians have consistently understated the extent, intensity, and effectiveness of the resistance with which the early junior college was met. Moreover, we will further argue that these historians, in giving short shrift to this resistance, have failed to give serious consideration to its reasonableness. As was the case with

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and Forward After 25 Years," Junior College Journal 9 (1939): 569. For Davis, the junior college was simply one part of a much larger reform movement within public education that only gradually unfolded between 1890 and 1920 as it overcame the "actual opposition of the entrenched conservatives" in control of both schools and colleges.

J. Stanley Brown, "Report of the Committee on the Junior College," Second Yearbook of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Cicero, IL: 1919), 56-63.

Walthill Junior College, a school's foes were not always selfishly-motivated reactionaries, but serious, pragmatic individuals convinced of their community's inability to support a credible junior college. These local critics simply preferred no junior college at all to an institution that, they believed, cost their community more than the benefits it provided.

But might Walthill's failed junior college have been the exception -- the unfortunate victim of extraordinary circumstance? As this chapter will document, the demise of this junior college was not at all unusual. A significant number of junior colleges of all three types faced opposition at the time of their founding, and many -- possibly 20 per cent of all the public junior colleges established between 1900 and 1940 -- eventually succumbed to those who viewed the junior college as an inappropriate, even illegal, extension of the public school.[4]

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[4] While recognizing that Campbell was referring to both public and private colleges, we can gain some insight into the high rate of mortality of the earliest junior colleges from his observation that "Dr. Greenleaf [of the USOE] reported in 1918 there were 84 junior colleges in the United States... Thirty-three of these have since closed, 7 have merged, 4 have become senior colleges, and 40 are still listed as junior colleges." See "A Growing Institution," Junior College Journal 7, no. 2 (1936): 99.

That opposition to the junior college was more than an isolated phenomenon is suggested by the surprising mortality rate of California's early junior colleges. Even in the Golden State -- Lange's "fertile soil" for the newest seed of the American public school -- local junior college advocates encountered fairly widespread and effective resistance, and even when they had won the initial battle to establish a junior college, nothing guaranteed its continued operation. As Stanford's William Proctor noted in 1928:

> [F]orty-four junior colleges have been organized [in California]. Since only thirty-one of these are now functioning, it means that thirteen have been discontinued. Three of those ... were absorbed by the University of California at Los Angeles. The other ten ... were connected with high schools. Some of these districts found the attendance too small to justify continuance, others found the tax burden too heavy.

Indeed, Proctor actually understated the extent and vigor of the opposition faced by the junior college in pre-1940 California. His calculation failed to include school

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Proctor, "California's Contributions to the Junior College Movement," 6. Frank Lindsay, who confirmed Proctor's analysis, laid the blame for the high mortality rate of California's junior colleges squarely on the shoulders of the state. Junior colleges closed "for the lack of clear, consistent state policy in the authorization of junior colleges." See Lindsay, "California Junior Colleges: Past and Present," 137.

districts -- like those of Ventura and Siskiyou counties -- in which a proposed junior college never opened because it was rejected outright by local voters. In the case of southern California's Ventura county, opponents of a proposed countywide junior college, which was to have been located in Ventura City, handily defeated the measure in 1927. Opposing votes were overwhelmingly concentrated in the largely rural precincts outside of Ventura City, suggesting that the county's rural residents believed that the proposed junior college would not have served their interests sufficiently to warrant the millage increase they would have been obligated to bear for its support.'

Although the historical record is less complete, it seems probable that opposition to the junior colleges was no less widespread outside of California. In the previous chapter, we noted the particular vulnerability of the earliest small town junior colleges in such states as Minnesota and Kansas to the same conditions that had led to the closure of many nineteenth century private colleges: fire, under-enrollment, and the vagaries of

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' "News from Ventura," Sierra Educational News 25 (1929): 52.

public support. Even the steady increase in the rate of high school and college attendance after 1900 was insufficient to offset the worsening demographic and economic conditions faced by many of the Midwestern small towns that had sponsored these colleges. For Nebraska's Walthill, Holton in Kansas, Pipestone in Minnesota, and similar small towns, objective conditions eventually won out over parental interests and civic aspirations. The twin dilemmas noted by Proctor -- low enrollment and unwelcome taxes -- undermined the enthusiasm that had inspired many small town junior colleges and eventually forced their closure.

But no one should be surprised that public junior colleges failed so frequently, since so much about them

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The vulnerability of junior colleges was especially pronounced in Oklahoma. There, as the State Board of Education noted in 1940, of the 29 junior colleges established after 1921, just 19 survived to 1939. Oklahoma State Board of Education, The Eighteenth Biennial Report (Oklahoma City, OK: 1940), 76.

In some communities, civic leaders chose to ignore past failures and made repeated attempts to establish a junior college. As was described in Chapter IV, in California's Placer County, a junior college was established in 1914, only to close sometime after 1916. In 1936, the county made a second attempt to establish a viable junior college, but it also failed in the 1950s. The most recent, and apparently successful, attempt to organize a two-year college in Placer came in the 1970s with the organization of Sierra Community College.

invited opposition. At a time when only a small minority of young people graduated from high school, and less than half of all graduates went on to college, local school boards and voters had every reason to question the reasonableness of expending scarce tax revenue on an institution whose benefits would go only to an exclusive few.' Nor were local voters alone in having reason to question the wisdom of junior college sponsorship. For governors, state school officials, and legislators the junior college represented a potential new claimant upon meager state treasuries already straining to provide for normal schools, "flagship" state universities, and the first attempts at equalizing funding across public school districts. At the same time, for the traditional denominational college the junior college represented nothing more than a publicly subsidized competitor for scarce students and their tuition dollars.

In summary, the emergence of the public junior college was much more than a simple morality play. Just as

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' In Malcolm Love's study of Iowa's junior college, as late as 1937 less than one in five students enrolled in the upper two years of the state's public high schools went on to enroll in an Iowa junior college. Moreover, only about half of those who entered one of the state's junior colleges as a freshman subsequently enrolled as a sophomore. Malcolm Love, "Public Junior Colleges in Iowa," Junior College Journal 9, no. 1 (1938): 84.

the junior college's proponents were not all benevolent heralds of progress, neither were its opponents a rag-tag collection of self-interested elites, the parsimonious, and the hopelessly unenlightened. In virtually all communities that considered junior college sponsorship, the interests and motivations of the principals to the decision varied tremendously. No simplistic explanation of the junior college's emergence can hope to capture the extent of these differences or the innumerable ways they were resolved over the course of this century's first four decades. Yet any sufficient explanation of the public junior college must also include an impartial assessment of the interests and motivations of those who opposed these institutions.

To better understand those who resisted calls for the establishment of junior colleges, it is necessary to pose a new set of questions of the historical record. At a minimum, the question must be asked whether any opposition to a proposed junior college was simply the expression of the narrow self-interest of parsimonious taxpayers or of anti-intellectuals, or whether it drew its strength from supporters of existing colleges, who may have feared the junior college as a potential competitor for scarce resources, students, and prestige. We should ask, as well,

if opposition to the junior college was essentially parochial in nature or drew its strength from various cosmopolitan interests, including state governments, national educational associations, and private colleges and universities.

In seeking answers to these questions, we will look primarily to the experience of individual communities as they grappled with the decision to extend the public school to include the junior college. But we will also look beyond individual communities to explore what had become, by the 1920s, the increasingly influential role of state governments, the courts, and private colleges and universities upon the decision-making of local school districts. As we will show, while junior colleges grew out of parochial alliances, over the course of the twentieth century local opponents of these alliances increasingly looked outside their immediate community in the hope of forging counter alliances with state-wide interests -- an effort, we will see, that often proved quite successful in frustrating the designs of local junior college advocates.

Local Opposition to the Junior College

As was noted in the third chapter, once a community's boosters, parents, and young people threw their support behind a proposed junior college, anyone who might

question such an initiative had little hope of stemming the tide. Well into the mid-1920s, inadequate state law, ineffective state departments of education, and indifferent legislatures left Chambers of Commerce and their allies largely free to establish junior colleges at will. In the absence of state controlling legislation, these alliances could establish a junior college without formal planning, public involvement, or the threat of state intervention.

The events which proceeded the opening of California's Santa Rosa Junior College in 1918 point up the very real disadvantages faced by local critics of a proposed junior college in the absence of effective controlling legislation.[1] Following the pattern common in other small cities, the impetus in Santa Rosa to establish a public junior college originated within a voluntary civic association dominated by community elites. As described by Floyd Bailey, the proposal to add a junior college to Santa Rosa's senior high school was initially

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[1] Although California adopted its first true junior college law in 1917, this act did little more than codify the right of a school district to establish a junior college as a department of its high school and claim state aid for the department's students. It did not stipulate the process that was to be followed in establishing such a department or provide for state oversight of that process.

advanced by the Federated Home and School Association (FHSA).[1] FHSA's membership, drawn from the wives of Santa Rosa's "leading men," saw a local junior college as both a solution to certain local concerns and a boon to civic aspirations, much as would civic leaders in Temple and San Mateo a decade later. For FHSA's members and their husbands, a junior college would provide an alternative to the distant and threatening University of California, bring new business to town, and help solidify Santa Rosa's position as its region's principal city.

Anyone who might have wished to challenge FHSA's proposal had little time or opportunity to influence events. In bringing its proposal for a junior college before the Santa Rosa school board, FHSA members made no effort to exceed the minima stipulated in California's weak 1917 Junior College Act. After a single discussion of the proposal at a meeting on November 13, 1917, FHSA's members took it upon themselves to schedule a public hearing on the issue for November 16, 1917. It is not even certain that the forum took place (the city's only newspaper, the Santa Rosa Press Democrat, did not report the event), but one suspects that even if there had been a

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[1] Bailey, Santa Rosa Junior College, 1918-1957, 3-4.

hearing, it was a pro forma affair. After winning the endorsement of the city's Chamber of Commerce, FHSA secured formal approval of its proposal from the Santa Rosa school board in April, 1918. Apparently without debate, the school board voted to establish a junior college as a department of its small high school and scheduled the college's opening for September 1918.

Although it is true that there is no record of any widespread opposition to the opening of Santa Rosa Junior College, neither were there expressions of any broad-based public interest or support. The school's first class enrolled just 18, and it would take more than a decade for enrollment to exceed 50. In part, this indifference might be explained by the poor timing of the school's opening. The public was concerned with the war and the ravages of a serious flue epidemic, which forced Santa Rosa's public schools to close for much of 1918. Interest in the new junior college was also likely weakened when, shortly after its opening, the building which housed the city's high school and new junior college burned to the ground, setting off a five-year court battle between school officials and those opposed to bonding for the

construction of a replacement facility.[12]

Admittedly, the absence of any explicit expressions of opposition to Santa Rosa's junior college might reflect a general acceptance of this institution within the community at large, but it is just as likely that any criticism of the venture was lost among the larger events of an unusually turbulent time. Further, it would be surprising to find explicit opposition to any school initiative voiced in either the newspapers or school board minutes of this era, since boosterism, not objectivity or balance, was the hallmark of local newspapers, and the school board minutes from this period are models of brevity, often bordering on superficiality.[13]

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[12] During this period, Santa Rosa's junior college was relegated to an abandoned elementary school, which certainly did little to enhance the standing of the school in the eyes of the community.

[13] Of course, not all newspapers blindly accepted the identification of public schooling with progress and civic improvement, with big city newspapers being particularly critical of junior colleges. A 1928 editorial by the Philadelphia Evening Public Ledger, reacting to yet another proposal to establish a public college in that city, typified the response of big city dailies:

> It would be a mistake, especially while a state university is flourishing, to deny youngsters the rudiments of an education for the sake of giving older students a city-paid college education.

Reprinted in "A City College," The School Executives Magazine 48 (December 1928): n.p. But in small cities and

Yet even given the overt boostermism of most local newspapers and the general inadequacy of school board minutes, these and other sources still provide sufficient evidence to permit some generalizations as to the nature and extent of opposition to the junior college. These sources reveal, for example, that the junior college's most effective critics, like its proponents, were motivated by parochial concerns. These sources further indicate that, like its proponents, junior college critics were not always narrowly self-interested. They, too, rationally weighed a junior college's costs and benefits; they simply arrived at a different conclusion. But most importantly, the record indicates that the junior college's local opponents differed from the institution's boosters in that they were willing to look outside their immediate community for allies, including state officials, the courts, and small college presidents. Indeed, it was this tactic, we will argue, that not only explains much of the success of the junior college's local antagonists in overcoming the inherent advantages enjoyed by junior

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towns, the interests of civic boosters largely determined a local newspaper's selection and treatment of stories, since it was their businesses that paid for the advertising upon which these papers depended for their survival.

college advocates, but also contributed to the progressive erosion in local authority over the establishment and governance of junior colleges as state legislatures responded to the concerns of junior college critics through the adoption of controlling legislation.

1. Opposition Based on Misunderstanding

Although local critics of the junior college most often acted out of reasoned principle, it would be misleading if it were not also acknowledged that some opposition was both uniformed and unreasonable, and that such opposition arose from fundamental weaknesses in the manner by which most early twentieth century American communities governed their public schools. Before the advent of commercial radio and television, a citizen's knowledge of matters up for public debate was largely conditioned by factors of wealth and social standing. It is not so much that the poor could not afford access to the media - which, in most American towns and cities, consisted of a mix of daily and weekly newspapers - but that they were excluded from those civic associations, such as Santa Rosa's FASHA, through which much of the debate on school matters was mediated before being brought

to a public vote.[14]

Within this context, one should neither assume that all residents of a community enjoyed the same access to information on school affairs, nor that a citizen's lack of information was necessarily an obstacle to his or her taking a position on an issue – often, as we will see, with serious and unintended consequences for a proposed junior college. While Chambers of Commerce and Kiwanis clubs were quite effective in marshaling elite opinion on behalf of a proposed junior college, their campaigns failed frequently to reach the vast majority of a city's voters. These voters -- day laborers, small farmers, shop clerks, and other working poor -- relied upon informal and frequently inaccurate sources of information about a proposed junior college, its relationship to the public schools, and its guiding purposes.

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[14] It was through such "non-partisan" associations, as Joel Spring has described, that the public schools of this era were indirectly governed. Even beyond their role as the chief forum for debate on school policy, these associations served as the principal mechanism through which candidates were selected to run for what were, in theory, "non-partisan" school board seats. While this elitist approach to school governance can be credited with advancing such progressive innovations as the kindergarten, it also fostered great disparities in access to information, so that many school elections pitted the informed against the uninformed with, as was the case in Fort Scott, Kansas, quite unexpected consequences. See Spring, The American School 1642-1985, 225.

As we have seen with the establishment of Santa Rosa Junior College, the opinion of a community's non-elites, whether for or against a junior college, was of no real consequence for much of the first quarter of this century, since the failure of most states to adopt controlling legislation effectively left the establishment of a junior college entirely to a school board's discretion. But beginning in 1917, the legislatures of Michigan and Kansas took the lead in adopting enabling legislation that, although extending legal recognition to public junior colleges, restricted the right of civic leaders to act unilaterally in establishing a junior college.[15] Both state legislatures stipulated, in addition to a number of other restrictive provisions, that any new junior college be approved through a referendum of local voters. This requirement to secure explicit voter approval of a junior college posed a serious challenge to many local advocates, given their lack of established channels of communication with those voters who were neither active in the voluntary associations nor whose children, for the most part, would benefit from a junior college.

One early junior college that would be repeatedly,

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[15] Kansas Laws 1917, c. 283, 410 and Michigan Public Acts 1917, No. 146, 269.

and very nearly fatally, victimized by a communication failure of just this sort was southeastern Kansas's Fort Scott Junior College. By all outward appearances, the 1918 decision of Fort Scott's school board to place the question of a junior college before district voters in compliance with Kansas law enjoyed general public support. The board itself was solidly in favor of the measure, as were and the city's leading civic organizations and the Fort Scott Tribune.

As the date of the referendum approached, however, the Tribune's editor and local school officials realized that its outcome was far from certain. Those voters who should have most favored a junior college -- the parents of high school students -- had somehow come to the judgment that the proposed college was not in their best interest. In a rare departure from the one-sidedness of the era's newspapers, the Tribune reported that some undetermined number of parents had believed erroneously that the addition of a junior college would extend the high school course to six full years, and that students would be required to complete these two additional years of study merely to earn a conventional high school diploma. Though entirely mistaken, these parents were quite sensibly opposed to any lengthening of the high

school course without obvious benefit, and if we are to judge by the Tribune's reaction, their number was sufficient to throw the fate of the referendum into question.

On the eve of the referendum, the very real prospect of defeat led the Tribune to devote its front page to clarifying the junior college's relationship to the high school and the diploma. The paper made every effort to reassure parents that the diploma would still be awarded at the conclusion of the traditional four-year course and that junior college attendance would be entirely voluntary. The purpose of the junior college, the Tribune reminded Fort Scott's citizens, was simply to provide the option of a local college for those high school graduates not yet ready or willing to relocate to Emporia or Lawrence.[16]

While the Tribune did not report an exact tally for the referendum, its last-minute campaign to "explain" the junior college appears to have succeeded in persauding a majority of the city's voters.[17] But as local historian

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[16] "School Vote Tomorrow: Extension of High School Course Doesn't Lengthen High School Course," Fort Scott Tribune, 4 November 1918.

[17] In reporting passage of the referendum, the Tribune acknowledged that "a considerable number of the

Winfield Molen found, the campaign preceding the referendum did not resolve all misunderstandings and misperceptions surrounding Fort Scott's new junior college. Indeed, "misapprehensions" were sufficiently widespread to erode the college's initial support and very nearly lead to its closure in 1921. The initial consternation over the high school diploma, Molen found, simply gave way to other concerns:

> The first few years of the existence of our college were uncertain and filled with many problems. The junior college idea was new. The institution was the victim of much misrepresentation relative to the validity of its credits. Many other unfair and unreasonable questions were raised often by those who had some ulterior motives in the matter.[18]

While the record fails to identify who in Fort Scott had "ulterior motives" to disparage the junior college, there is substantial evidence that Fort Scott's school administrators were frequently called upon to defend the college against a range of general and specific

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comparatively few persons who voted against the extension did so through a misapprehension, believing that it would mean that a student would have to attend high school six years to graduate." "The High School Wins," Fort Scott Tribune, 8 November 1918.

[18] Winfield Molen, "From an Acorn a Mighty Oak," mimeographed, (Fort Scott, KS: Fort Scott Community College, 1969), n.p.

criticisms. The most serious threat to the college appears to have come in May, 1921. Even the Tribune's editor, initially an unqualified junior college booster, voiced grave doubts over the junior college's claim that its courses were fully transferable to the University of Kansas. The junior college's courses, reported the Tribune, had not been articulated with the university, making any units earned by Ft. Scott's junior college students effectively worthless, much to the general shame of the community.[1]

To the newspaper's credit, it did allow D. H. Ramsey, Fort Scott's Superintendent of Schools, to respond to this serious charge. While indirectly confirming the basic truth of the newspaper's report, Ramsey, in good bureaucratic style, managed to lay the blame for the "crisis" at the feet of the university. He claimed that everything had been done that was required to ensure the transferability of the junior college's courses, but that university officials at Lawrence had simply failed to provide him with formal notice of its accredited status. To substantiate his claim, Ramsey indicated that he had gone so far as to phone unnamed university "authorities"

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[1] Editorial, Fort Scott Tribune, 17 May, 1921.

to confirm the junior college's accredited status. Obviously stung by the Tribune's charge, Ramsey concluded his remarks by stressing the importance of community support for the young college. Suggesting that this was not the only time the young college had faced public reproach, Ramsey pleaded with Tribune readers that:

> It is exceedingly important, just at the establishment of the Junior College that criticism and fault finding be reduced to the minimum."[20]

For the most part, Ramsey's explanation had its desired effect. In its issue of May 18, the Tribune offered something of an indirect apology for its criticism of the junior college's administration by denouncing the university for its delay in providing Superintendent Ramsey with notice of the school's accreditation. At the same time, the newspaper sought to justify its position by criticizing the junior college for failing to pursue confirmation of its accredited status more aggressively. This laxity on the part of the school administration

> naturally aroused the anxiety of the students who are finishing their junior college course here, and occasioned complaint on the part of their

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[20] "The Junior College," Fort Scott Tribune, May 18 1921.

parents.

Moreover, added the paper, unnamed students had been in correspondence with other colleges, and they had been informed that Fort Scott's courses would not be recognized until its relationship to the University of Kansas was formally and publicly resolved.

The misunderstandings which fueled opposition to Fort Scott Junior College were hardly unique. Similar misconceptions also appear to at least partially explain the opposition that contributed to the voters' rejection of a junior college in California's Siskiyou County in 1926 and the wide-spread, if finally unsuccessful, resistance to the adoption of Koos's controversial 6-4-4

"Junior College Credits," Fort Scott Tribune, 18 May 1921.

Even after its relationship with the University of Kansas had been clarified, Fort Scott's troubles did not end. In March, 1922, the college was again put on the defensive by apparently widespread doubt as to its general collegiate character. That month, the junior college's dean, J. H. Shideler, sought to confront his critics through the device of an open letter to H.H. Russell, secretary of the Fort Scott Chamber of Commerce. As reprinted in the Tribune, Shideler's letter not only implored the Chamber to more widely advertise the advantages of the junior college, but to place particular emphasis on the fact that it was giving "two years of real college work." "Two Years' College Work," Fort Scott Tribune, 4 March, 1922.

plan by voters in Pasadena, California.[1] From Fort Scott's experience what we learn is not simply that not all opposition to schooling "progress" was necessarily well-informed or deeply principled, but that uniformed opposition was especially difficult to overcome. Moreover, while hard to measure, this shadowy opposition undoubtedly represented an important ally for those who questioned the public junior college on more substantive grounds.

2. Anti-Tax Sentiment

From the beginning of this century, many junior college advocates correctly recognized that the most vocal and effective opposition to the public junior college would come from local taxpayers antagonistic to any increase in their school levy. As early as 1904, the University of Michigan's W.R. Payne, a member of the

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[1] For a detailed discussion of the obstacles encountered by the proponents of a junior college for Northern California's Siskiyou County, see Nicolas Ricciardi, Junior College Survey of Siskiyou County California (Yreka, CA: 1929), 10-11. For a description of the six month controversy that preceded the establishment of Pasadena's 6-4-4 plan, see William F. Ewing, "The Pasadena Junior College Organization," in Problems in Education (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1927), 37-38. John Sexon, the Pasadena school superintendent, described the rationale for his district's adoption of this plan (making no reference to any opposition) in John A. Sexon, "Six-Four-Four Plan of School Organization," American Educational Digest 79, (October, 1928): 56-59.

Commission of 21, asserted that widespread sponsorship of locally-financed junior colleges in Michigan would be unlikely. The state's farmers and other large landholders were so uncompromisingly parsimonious, he argued, that no "board of education in Michigan ... would incur such risk" by opening a junior college.[24] Payne was not alone in his view of taxpayers. Just two years later, School Review echoed Payne's sentiments:

> The public high schools are likely to encounter considerable difficulty in [offering courses covering the first two years of college study] because of the increased cost involved for the necessary equipment and teaching staff.[25]

Fortunately for the future of the junior college, subsequent events proved Payne and School Review wrong. Their dire predictions failed to take into account the offsetting benefits that a junior college would provide to a wide range of politically powerful community interests, including parents, civic boosters, and local merchants. Whatever its tax consequences for farmers and other large landholders, for many others a junior college's benefits far exceeded any marginal increase in their property taxes

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[24] W. H. Payne, "The General Conference," School Review 12 (1904): 21.

[25] "Editorial," School Review 16 (1906): 609.

sponsorship would entail. This was especially the case in those communities, such as San Mateo and Scottsbluff, with significant taxable wealth and an adequate school-aged population to ensure reasonable economies of scale in the operation of a junior college.

At the same time, a careful reading of the record reveals that local junior college boosters were well aware that its costs and benefits would not be equitably distributed across the community and, in light of this awareness, they made every effort to avoid giving large landowners and others who would gain little direct benefit from a junior college any cause to actively resist the institution. To this end, junior college advocates adopted one of two general strategies. The first was a policy of studied silence, in which a board member and its administrators simply avoided drawing public attention to their junior college -- in what seems a naive hope that what taxpayers knew little about, they would not challenge actively. The second and more widespread strategy was to shift some or all of the costs of a junior college from local taxpayers to its students and, indirectly, local boosters. Where this strategy was adopted, we find the imposition of often heavy tuition charges on junior college students and the aggressive

pursuit of subscriptions from local businesses, much in the way private colleges were funded in the nineteenth century.

Ironically, silence, as a strategy for blunting possible criticism of a junior college, was employed by one of the junior college's most prominent early advocates: Joliet's school superintendent, J. Stanley Brown. In national circles, Brown was unambiguous in his support for the high school-based junior college. But within the Joliet community itself, Brown rarely mentioned his school district's collegiate program and did not permit the program to be described as a "junior college" in school records or publications during his tenure at Joliet.[1] Brown's seeming inconsistency was no accident, as even Brown's contemporaries recount, but grew out of the superintendent's fear that any attention drawn to his district's collegiate experiment within the community might spark overt opposition from powerful local taxpayers. As one of Joliet's early deans, I.A. Yaggy,

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[1] Robert Smolich, in his history of Joliet Junior College, was particularly struck by Brown's low-keyed treatment of the district's junior college progam. In the critical year of 1902, for example, Smolich found that "little fanfare announced the expansion of [Joliet's] old postgraduate classes into full five- and six-year programs." Smolich, "Origin and Early Development of Three Mid-Western Public Junior Colleges," 78.

recalled in a letter to E.K. Fretwell:

> Dr. Brown was very much afraid that the taxpayers might object to using high school funds for college work if it were publicized too much.[27]

Brown was not alone in his reticence to draw public attention to his school district's junior college. Iowa's Red Oak school board was no less reluctant to make public comments on its junior college, one of Iowa's first. As R. Clark McVie found in his review of Red Oak board minutes for the years between 1920 and 1950, references to the district's small junior college were brief, vague, and infrequent, even though board members routinely discussed other matters at great length.[28] On May 19, 1922, for example, Red Oak's board minutes report that a motion was adopted to consider the organization of a junior college. While state records confirm that Red Oak was operating a junior college in 1928, school minutes fail to mention its formal board authorization. The Red Oak board's next mention of its junior college would not come until 1927, when it discussed the possibility of adding a sophomore year. It is unlikely, although the record is silent, that

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[27] Elbert K. Fretwell, Founding Public Junior Colleges: Local Initiatives in Six Communities (New York: Teachers College Press,, 1959), 15.

[28] Personal correspondence from R. Clark McVie, 2 March 1982.

no action was taken on this proposal, since the Red Oak board again considered organizing a sophomore class in 1930, but set conditions that the college's administration likely could not meet.[*] Although McVie believes that Red Oak Junior College still operated as late as 1951, and may have enrolled as many as 80 students during the 1930s, it was virtually ignored by its own governing board. In Red Oak, as in Joliet under Brown, school leaders clearly believed that as little said about a junior college, the better.

In the attempt to minimize local opposition to junior colleges, a strategy of cost-shifting appears to have been more generally preferred than Brown's closed-mouth treatment of his junior college. As we saw in the first chapter, the record provides repeated examples of pragmatic school and civic leaders more than willing to adopt practices and policies designed to mute criticism of a proposed junior college, even if such actions compromised the ideology of the "free, universal public

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[*] According to McView, at its meeting of April 21, 1930, the Red Oak board did vote to add a second year to its junior college's curriculum, but approval was contingent upon the enrollment of at least 15 students. He was unable to determine if this condition was met.

school."[36] Those school boards which adopted this strategy appear to have been fully aware that they were compromising the "common school" ideology, but it also appears that they were willing to make this sacrifice if it would lessen local opposition to a junior college.

The rationale for imposing tuition on junior college students had actually taken form early in the century, even before junior colleges were generally known as such. In 1904, Goshen's Victor Hedgepeth made a point of including the public announcement of his district's new "six year high school" that the direct costs of its fifth and sixth years would be covered entirely by an annual tuition of $30. Hedgepeth, writing in School Review, acknowledged that this fee more than likely violated

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[36] In some instances, communities established a junior college with every intention of keeping it tuition-free, but were eventually compelled to impose student charges when faced with declining enrollments and increasing costs. Washington's Everett Junior College, for example, opened on a tuition-free basis in 1915. Unfortunately, student enrollments declined steadily after reaching a peak of 58 in 1916, becoming a mere handful by 1923 and raising per-student costs dramatically. That year, Everett's school board attempted to offset a portion of their shrinking junior college's fixed costs by imposing a mere $5 tuition fee. While nominal, this tuition charge proved to be the last straw, and no students were enrolled by 1927, bringing about the de facto closure of Washington State's first junior college. See Crawfurd, The Junior College Movement in Washington State, 56-57.

Indiana law, but he viewed tuition as good for the student (since it taught the student responsibility) and it effectively precluded any criticism of his innovative program by school district taxpayers:

> As long as the institution of these extra courses does not operate to raise the tax levy, the most indifferent citizen cannot object, even though the law does not provide for the charging of fees in the public free schools.[31]

As a general rule, the willingness of junior college proponents to sacrifice common school ideology and accept the need to charge tuition effectively negated much of the taxpayer opposition that Payne, Brown, and others had

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[31] Hedgepeth, "The Six Year High School Plan at Goshen, Ind.": 20. It was not a foregone conclusion on which side of this issue schoolmen and community leaders would fall. In 1930, the local press severely criticized Minnesota's Duluth Junior College when it set its tuition rate for the year at $200, the highest in the state. The Duluth (MN) Herald immediately attacked this "snobbish" action, predicting that it would render the junior college "available only to the children of the well-to-do." The junior college reduced its tuition to $100 the next year, although its decision was more likely motivated by the decision of some high school graduates to register as tuition-free postgraduates in the Duluth high schools rather than in the school districts junior college, resulting in a severe enrollment decline at the junior college, than by the Herald's comments. See "Duluth Junior College," Junior College Journal 2, no. 1 (1931): 40 and R.D. Chadwick, "Public Junior Colleges of Minnesota," Junior College Journal 3, no. 7 (1934): 347.

feared.[32] Yet as general economic conditions worsened toward the end of the 1920s, taxpayers showed an increasing reluctance to support a junior college even when tuition met most of its direct costs. Such proved to be the case with the short-lived junior college of Grand Island, Nebraska. From the city's incorporation in the 1880s, Grand Island's residents had willingly supported the continued expansion of schooling opportunities in their community. As the seat of Hall County and the major commercial hub for a rich agricultural region, by the close of the nineteenth century Grand Island had assembled the institutional ornaments of an aspiring city, including a progressive public school system and the Baptist-sponsored Grand Island College.

Well into the twentieth century, Grand Island experienced steady population growth, which provided the basis for a significant expansion of schooling opportunities. Between 1910 and 1930, the city's population increased by 75 percent, approaching 20,000 in

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[32] Idaho's small Coeur d'Alene Junior College was one such college. Established in 1933 as a non-profit corporation under the control of the city's school, its administrators made a point of announcing at its opening that it did not accept any taxpayer support, but relied entirely upon "tuition, fees and gifts." "Coeur d'Alene Junior College," Junior College Journal 5, no. 3 (1934): 145.

1930. In 1927, reflecting what one education writer described as its "confidence in education and in the generations to come," the Grand Island school district constructed a large multi-winged senior high school at a cost of more than $350,000, or nearly three times the value of the entire Grand Island College campus. The new high school facility included a large auditorium and gym, the usual complement of classrooms and laboratories, auto and sheet metal shops, and even marble ornamentation.[33]

Unfortunately, Grand Island College did not prosper in tandem with its city's public schools. Not only did the college fail to establish a reputation for scholarship, but over the course of the 1920s its financial condition grew steadily more precarious.[34] A small endowment necessitated relatively high tuition and room charges, and the financial support of its Baptist sponsors grew increasingly unreliable by 1930.[35] Matters were brought

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[33] "The Grand Island High School," American Educational Digest 48 (December, 1928): 154-155.

[34] Grand Island College was relegated to Category III in the U.S. Bureau of Education's 1911 suppressed ranking of colleges prepared by R. C. Babcock, the Bureau's first specialist for higher education.

[35] A sense of Grand Island College's precarious financial state can be gained from comparing data on endowments and campus value contained in the 1923 and 1928 editions of the Blue Book. The college's balance sheet was

to a head in June 1931, when the Baptists announced they would reduce their financial commitment to higher education by merging Grand Island College into South Dakota's Sioux Falls College.

Grand Island's civic leaders recognized the threat this loss posed to their city's metropolitan status, but they were not without their options. Taking advantage of Nebraska's recently adopted Junior College Act, they sought voter approval of a junior college to be housed in the Grand Island College's abandoned campus but operated as part of the public school system. The measure's proponents had some reason for optimism. The new college would make no demands on existing high school facilities or faculty, and much of its direct costs would be borne by students, who would be required to pay the annual tuition of $108 stipulated in state law. While some local tax support would be necessary, it would be nominal. The city could preserve its standing as the leading city of west central Nebraska by simply substituting a public junior college for the lost Baptist school.

Whatever this plan's merits, Grand Island voters had no interest in supporting a junior college on any terms.

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clearly among the weakest of the Nebraska private colleges of the time.

In a February 1932 referendum, Grand Island voters soundly rejected the authorization of a junior college by a margin of some 600 votes. Apparently unwilling to accept these results, the school board called for a second referendum to be held in March, hoping that this would give the junior college's boosters time to win over a majority of the voters. Yet despite a concerted campaign, Grand Island voters rejected the college by an even wider margin. The twice-defeated board had no choice but to close the junior college and abandon its efforts to preserve higher education in Grand Island.

Given the dire economic conditions of the day and the obligation of Grand Island taxpayers to re-pay the large bond for their monumental high school, it is not at all surprising that the city's voters showed little enthusiasm for a junior college. Even though much of the school's expense would have fallen on students through state-mandated tuition charges, and many tuition-paying students would have likely come from outside the Grand Island district, the city's voters were simply unwilling in difficult times to approve any initiative, however worthy, when it might entail some potential tax obligation.

3. Equity Concerns

While some taxpayers certainly objected to the public junior college for no other reason than an aversion to tax increases, however worthy the purpose, others found the junior college objectionable on much more rational grounds. Many taxpayers, for example sincerely felt that the elementary and high schools had first claim to all school tax revenue. No diversion of these funds should be allowed, they argued, to any other purpose until the needs of both were first met adequately. In their view, it was simply unfair to expend public funds on a junior college that would lessen the personal cost of a college education for a handful of high school graduates if such expenditures came at the expense of elementary and secondary students.

As was described in the fourth chapter, this line of thinking led the Philadelphia school board to reject repeated requests to append a junior college to their city's Central High School. Indeed, for those today who characterize the community college as America's most egalitarian schooling institution, it should seem more than a little ironic that in Philadelphia, at least, it was the junior college's <u>opponents</u> whose position more closely reflected a commitment to the principle of

democratic access. A school system, they argued, should first expend its limited funds to ensure all youth access to a high school diploma, even if this commitment meant that some high school graduates might well be denied the benefit a proximate, low-cost college education.

Some years later, George Zook described a variation on this basic equity theme. In a study of public attitudes toward the junior college in Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Kansas City, Zook discovered widespread discontent among residents that a portion of their school tax was supporting a junior college." It was the feeling of those Zook surveyed that such support represented a fundamentally unfair burden on their community, in that local funding of a junior college only served to relieve the state of its traditional responsibility to provide for public higher education. Why, those surveyed appeared to ask, should local taxpayers bear the cost of a redundant institution for students whose choice to attend college at home was simply a matter of personal preference?

Even some of California's most committed junior

" Zook, "The Junior College," 580. In 1940, the Chicago Tribune, never a supporter of the city's junior colleges, raised the same argument, contending that Springfield should assume the cost of "what traditionally are state rather than local functions." Chicago Tribune, 30 November 1940.

college proponents came to question the equity in shifting a substantial portion of higher education's costs from the state onto the local taxpayer through the junior college. Walter Morgan, a senior California education official in the early 1930's, was quick to fault the recommendation of the 1932 Carnegie study that all lower-division instruction be assigned to the state's junior colleges. Morgan criticized any move to implement such a policy, arguing that the result would be an inequitable redistribution of educational costs from the state to local taxpayers at the very time that progressive thinking favored the very opposite allocation of costs. In Morgan's judgement,

> [t]he modern tendency is for the state as a whole to absorb more and more of the school costs; herein [referring to the Carnegie report] they recommend that a large block of higher education, now state-supported (university lower division), now be saddled back as an expense upon local districts -- changing from a scheme acceptable to educators to one not acceptable and increasing the local district taxation materially.[1]

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[1] "Fallacies of Carnegie Report," Sierra Educational News 32, no. 10 (1932): 15. Ironically, junior college advocates were not at all adverse to use this same argument when it might advance their cause. Some legislators supported Nebraska's 1931 junior college act on the grounds that it would reduce state expenditures on higher education. Still others used a variant on this argument to push for generous levels of state aid for junior colleges. Fred Lawson argued in 1931 that from "a

Another equity concern frequently raised in opposition to a junior college was more parochial in nature. Quite reasonably, some taxpayers objected to a junior college's enrollment of out-of-district students on the same basis as local residents. Why, they argued, should a student benefit from the taxes raised in a school district in which his family does not live? Before the adoption of its 1921 Junior College Act, this concern was especially widespread in California and restrained at least one community from establishing a junior college. Prior to 1921, California law required that any school district maintaining a high school -- and these were located primarily in the state's larger and more affluent communities -- absorb the cost of any non-resident student whose home school district had not established its own high school. This inequitable provision of California's school law seriously frustrated efforts at annexation. What sensible community would accept annexation into a district that operated a high school if it could enroll

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purely democratic point of view the state should give aid equal to the amount given for the education of a student in each of the first two years of the university." No state legislature ever agreed with Lawson. Fred Lawson, "State Aid for Public Junior Colleges," Junior College Journal 1 (1931): 487-493.

its youth in the school without paying for its support?[18] At the same time, it also discouraged larger communities which did support a high school from taking on the added cost of a junior college, since that would only increase their exposure to the cost of educating out-of-district students.[19]

The reluctance of communities to take on a junior college because of the "problem" of out-of-district students is apparent in the San Jose school district's failure to establish a junior college until the California legislature established a more equitable method for allocating non-resident student costs among school districts. As San Jose's school superintendent, Alexander Sheriffs, argued in a letter to the Santa Clara County supervisors prior to California's 1921 legislative session, the addition of a junior college to San Jose's high school program would have compounded the inequity already suffered by his district's public high school. San

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[18] "Would Reduce Tax by School Annexations," San Jose Mercury Herald, 11 January 1921.

[19] In the case of California, because its 1917 Junior College Act treated a junior college as an extension of its sponsoring high school and not an independent institution, high school graduates could, like secondary students, attend any junior college in the state without cost to their district of residence.

Jose, wrote Sheriffs, was educating some 300 out-of-district high school students entirely at its own expense. The extension of the city's high school to include a junior college would simply increase an already unfair burden on San Jose taxpayers.[40]

In states other than California, where tuition was not prohibited, some local districts responded to the problem of out-of-district students by requiring them to pay a substantial tuition surcharge. Joliet Junior College district residents paid no tuition in 1928, but out-of-district students paid $200 a year -- approximately the full cost of their instruction. At Fort Scott, local residents could attend the junior college for free, but nonresidents paid $75 a year, while at Georgia's Junior College of Augusta a resident paid $100 a year, but a non-resident was liable for $180.[41]

Tuition surcharges for non-resident students appear to have muted the criticism of local taxpayers who had

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[40] In a fundamental shift of state policy, the 1921 Junior College Act resolved this inequity in favor of those districts that sponsored a junior college. The new law provided that school districts which did not maintain a junior college reimburse any junior college attended by their residents. The San Jose school district quickly organized a junior college following the law's adoption. California Statues, c. 495, s. 15, 756.

[41] Hurt, The College Blue Book, 201, 202, 206.

every good reason to object to a subsidization of "outsiders." Nor is there any record that out-of-district students or their parents ever complained of this practice. Only the Texas legislature favored the interests of out-of-district students, and its motives are open to conjecture. In 1933 the Texas legislature specifically proscribed such surcharges, yet provided no aid to junior colleges to offset the consequence of this action for the several dozen districts trying to maintain their junior colleges in the midst of a depression.[4]

State Government and Junior College Opposition

Even as late as 1925, most state governments reacted to the growing number of public junior colleges with indifference. As we have already noted, some have blamed this indifference for the relatively high mortality rate of early junior colleges. But in retrospect, ignoring the emergence of junior colleges was really the only practical option open to most state governments well into the late 1920s. As several state governments discovered, any attempt on their part to block the establishment of junior

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[4] Texas Laws 1933, c. 196, 596.

colleges was simply ignored by school districts.[43] Such, for example, was how the school boards of Joliet, Cicero, and LaGrange, Illinois, reacted to state Attorney General Oscar Carlson's 1927 ruling that "a board of education has no authority ... to establish or maintain a Junior College." In the Illinois of the 1920s, as in many other states during this era, the "[t]raditions of localism remained strong, and the centralizers [of the state] had great difficulty securing compliance with state law."[44]

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[43] See David Tyack, "State Government and American Public Education: Exploring the 'Primeval Forest'," History of Education Quarterly 26, no. 1 (1986): 40, for a discussion of the very limited influence of state governments upon public education early in this century. With respect to junior colleges, one unusual instance in which sponsoring communities ignored the expressed wishes of the legislature can be found in Mississippi. As stipulated in its 1928 enabling legislation, the nation's first state-coordinated system of public junior colleges was to provide an essentially vocational program, focusing on agriculture, domestic science, teacher training, commerce, and mechanical arts. Only where resources permitted were Mississippi's junior colleges to prepare students for professional schools. In the law, absolutely no mention is made of a traditional collegiate program. Yet that is what the state's junior colleges offered, without any challenge from the legislature. It seems that aspirations overcame the weight of law, as Young and Ewing found. A traditional college curriculum "would gain for the new colleges academic respectability and acceptance by local officials and the legislature." Young and Ewing, The Mississippi Public Junior College Story, 14-15.

[44] Tyack,"State Government and American Public Education", 55. The voters of Scottsbluff, Nebraska demonstrated the kind of blatant disregard for state law described by Tyack. In 1903, when Scottsbluff's assessed

But it was not simply a tradition of localism that limited the effective exercise of state authority. Given their small staffs and inadequate resources, state departments of education had difficulty enough compelling backsliding school districts to comply with the most basic of legislative mandates. State school superintendents must certainly have regarded it as a waste of scarce resources to take action against the upward extension of a high school program by a progressive district while other districts continued to maintain sod schools and 6 month calendars.

Yet even when a state government might have wished to countervail the decision of a local school district to sponsor a junior college, it lacked the means to compel compliance with its wishes. Throughout this period, direct state aid to public schools was nominal. Even as late as 1940 -- and despite a decade of steadily increasing state support -- local sources still provided public schools

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valuation limited its legal bonding authority for school construction to just $1,400, the city's school board simply issued warrants for $4,000 to complete a high school, apparently without objection from local taxpayers. See Thies, Scottsbluff's Social Development: 67. For a discussion of Carlson's ruling, see Thomas Lewis Hardin, A History of the Community Junior College in Illinois: 1901 - 1972, Ph.D. diss., University of Illinois, 1975: 90.

with nearly 70 percent of their funding. State governments contributed just 26 percent.[45] This funding imbalance denied state school officials an essential lever in their efforts to promote greater compliance by local school districts with state mandates. The Michigan legislature may not have approved of Detroit's sponsorship of a medical college, a normal school, and a junior college, but there was precious little it could do until the city could no longer afford these institutions and was forced to seek aid from the state.

Given the very limited influence of state legislatures of this period over local schools, it is little wonder that before 1925 most chose to simply ignore any public junior colleges organized within their boundaries. Rather than expending political capital on the potentially contentious task of legitimizing a few, small junior colleges, most legislatures allowed school districts to operate their junior colleges on an "extra-legal" basis as long as no claim was made on state revenues and no junior college was opened in a community that already supported a private college or state

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[45] Department of Education, 120 Years of American Education: A Statistical Portrait, 32-34.

institution.[46]

Table 7 reveals just how widespread was the "extra-legal" junior college. Even as late as 1925, the majority of all public junior colleges operated without specific authorizing legislation, and many had done so for more than a decade. In Iowa, Mason City's school board sponsored a junior college in 1918, nine years before Iowa's legislature passed permissive junior college legislation, while the Illinois legislature took until 1937 -- more than twenty years after Joliet Junior College's accreditation by the North Central Association -- to adopt a junior college act covering school districts outside the city of Chicago.[47] Even though the University

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[46] Even as late as 1930, E.O. Brothers found that only 12 of the 20 states in which at least one public junior college operated had passed permissive legislation. Nor did prospects seem good that the situation would improve. In 1929, as he reported, two governors had vetoed junior college bills while between four and five legislatures refused to act. See E. O. Brothers, "Legal Status of Publicly Supported Junior Colleges -- June, 1929," School Review 38 (1930): 737, 749.

[47] In the case of Iowa, an argument could be made that before 1927, the state's general school law was so vaguely worded that a district could even sponsor a senior college, if it could bear the cost. When the legislature finally adopted a junior college act, it appears to have been motivated largely by a desire to discourage the continued and seemingly irrational multiplication of junior colleges by small school districts in western Iowa. However, the legislature was unsuccessful in this regard. By 1933, Iowa supported 27 junior colleges, 20 of which

of Minnesota's president, George E. Vincent, advocated on behalf of the junior college from his arrival in the state in 1911, more than a decade passed between the opening of Minnesota's first junior college at Cloquet in 1914 and the Minnesota legislature's adoption of enabling legislation.[49]

The effects of this legislative indifference on the development of the junior college were several. In the absence of clear legislative direction, the place of the junior college within the developing system of public education was left unclear, a fact that may explain much of the seemingly endless questioning of the two-year college's "true" social function. By ignoring the junior colleges within their midst, state legislatures also

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had fewer than 100 students each. M. M. Chambers, "Junior College Statutes in the Middle West," Junior College Journal 3 (January, 1933): 188.

[49] Wisconsin and Montana represent notable exceptions to the tendency of state legislatures to resist local interest in forming public junior colleges. First in 1915, and then in 1927, the Wisconsin legislature authorized any city to establish a junior college as part of its school system. Interestingly, not a single city chose to exercise this authority. Montana adopted legislation in 1917 that allowed any city to operate a normal school, junior college or both as part of its public school system. Yet, as in Wisconsin, as late as 1933 the only junior college in the state was at Havre, and it was a state institution. Chambers, "Junior College Statutes in the Middle West": 185.

failed to establish reasonable minima for population, taxing capacity, and local support that might have forestalled the establishment of some smaller junior colleges virtually assured of failure. But one consequence easily overlooked is that legislative inaction forced local opponents of the junior college to seek out allies elsewhere in state government. And allies were found, some of whom proved remarkably effective in curtailing what was beginning to seem, by 1925, the inevitable upward extension of high schools of every size and in virtually every community.

Table 8
Extra-Legal Junior Colleges, Fifteen States
1914 - 1941

State	First Junior College	First Enabling Legislation	Extra-Legal Junior Colleges
Arizona	1920	1927	2
Arkansas	1925	None	4
Florida	1927	1939	2
Illinois	1916	1937	6
Iowa	1918	1927	11
Kentucky	1932	1936	1
Louisiana	1925	1928	3
Michigan	1914	1917	2
Minnesota	1914	1925	10
Missouri	1915	1927	5
Nebraska	1926	1931	5
Oklahoma	1920	1939	30
Texas	1920	1929	21
Washington	1915	1941	5

Note: Illinois is exclusive of Chicago

In looking across the states, one finds no consistent rule as to which branch or office of state government proved most sympathetic to the interests of the junior college's local opponents. By tradition, state courts were reluctant to intervene in school matters, preferring to defer to local educational authority. State universities and state school superintendents were necessarily conflicted in their reaction to the junior college. After all, they were in no position to raise principled objections to the expansion of educational opportunity, but junior colleges could mean additional competition for students and resources. Only state constitutional officers -- governors and attorneys general -- demonstrated any substantial willingness to take up the cause of the junior college's opponents, but their actions seemed to have been prompted less by any specific objection to the institution than by their individual political interests and their influence was limited by fixed terms of office. When it served their interests, state constitutional officers in California, Washington, Ohio, and Texas used timely legal opinions, the judicious use of bureaucratic authority, and even the occasional veto to counter the spread of the public junior college. But, as we will also see, the effect of such maneuvers could be readily reversed by a

legislature prodded into action by local junior college advocates.

1. The State Courts and the Public Junior College

In at least three states where the legislature had failed to adopt permissive junior college legislation -- North Carolina, Kentucky, and Louisiana -- local opponents sought judicial relief from a proposed junior college.[1] In all three states, plaintiffs argued that because school law did not specifically incorporate the junior college within the definition of the common school, school districts lacked the right to expend public funds on the operation of any form of upward extension of the traditional high school. Consistently, however, the state courts sided with local school boards, ruling that the legislative grants of authority under which these boards operated were broadly drawn and that the reasonable exercise of a school board's authority was not within the competence of a state court to question.

While not the first such case, the most widely reported court ruling on the legitimacy of the junior college was entered in Asheville, North Carolina. Like the

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[1] For Kentucky see Pollett v. Lewis et al., 269 Ky. 680, 108 S.V. (2d) 671 (1937), for Louisiana see McHenry et al. v. Ouchita Parish School Board, 169 La. 646, 125 So. 841 (1930).

famous Kalamazoo decision of 1875, the Asheville case was relatively simple and straightforward litigation.[*] In 1927, the school boards of Buncombe County and the city of Asheville jointly opened a junior college as an integral part of their public school systems. The junior college was tuition-free to residents of the two jurisdictions, with operational costs being funded on a shared basis entirely out of local school tax receipts.

Shortly after the college opened, an Asheville resident by the name of Zimmerman brought suit in Buncombe County Superior Court, claiming that the two school boards lacked the authority either to operate a junior college or to expend public funds on its behalf. In response, the two boards argued that their authority derived from discretionary powers granted to them by state law and was not subject to judicial review.

The Buncombe County court ruled in favor of Zimmerman. The local court determined that because the legislature had failed to define the junior college in state law, it could not be part of North Carolina's public school system. In August, 1930, an appeal of this decision was heard by the North Carolina supreme court. Following

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[*] For a summary of the Kalamazoo decision, see Spring, The American School 1642-1985, 195-96.

the hearing, the supreme court reversed the lower court's decision. It affirmed the right of the two school districts to establish and maintain a junior college as an integral part of the state's mandated "adequate and sufficient" public school program. The court further ruled that a school district's grant of authority was broad and generous, and that junior college sponsorship was an appropriate exercise of its authority. As the court noted, the decision to establish Asheville's junior college had not been capricious. Rather, it had been made by the two boards "in the exercise of their best judgment." Such judgement was not subject to judicial review.

Not surprisingly, the Zimmerman ruling was viewed as nothing less than a "momentous" event by Leonard Koos and the era's other junior college advocates.[1] As they realized, the "Asheville Decision" had the potential to match the impact of Kalamazoo. Indeed, the North Carolina supreme court had affirmed the right of a school board not

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[1] Zimmerman vs. the Board of Education, in North Carolina Reports, Cases Argued and Determined in the Supreme Court of North Carolina, (1930) (Raleigh: 1931), 259-264.

Leonard V. Koos, "A Momentous Judicial Decision Affecting the Junior College," School Review 37 (December, 1930): 12. See also Bureau of Education, Biennial Survey of Education: 1928-30, Bulletin, no. 20, (Washington, DC: 1931): 491-92.

only to establish a junior college but to expend public funds on its behalf even in the absence of permissive legislation. Junior college advocates touted Zimmerman as an endorsement of the nation's many extra-legal junior colleges, and the decision reinforced the view that the junior college was a natural extension of the common school. This association was particularly important to Koos, for it strengthened his argument for a total restructuring of American schooling along the lines of his hotly-contested "6-4-4" plan.

But any hope Koos might have harbored that Zimmerman would spark an upsurge in the number of junior colleges was quickly overtaken by the collapse of the American economy. The year 1930 was simply not 1875, and the devastating effects of the Great Depression precluded any great rush by school boards to sponsor junior colleges. Even communities that had a long history of investing in their public schools, such as Grand Island, Nebraska, had to put aside this and other innovations to maintain their basic school program in the face of eroding revenues.

2. The Executive Branch

Where state courts tended to defer to the authority of local school districts on matters involving the junior college, the executive agencies of state government showed

themselves increasingly willing as the era progressed to reign in this authority. While the ability of these agencies -- from the offices of state attorneys general to departments of education -- to restrict local sponsorship of junior colleges may have been hampered by strong traditions of localism, they not only had some success early-on in overruling local junior college advocates, but their successes frequently prompted state legislation that greatly restricted the right of school districts to sponsor a junior college.

Until 1925, when state legislatures began to take their responsibility to regulate the junior college more seriously, state attorneys general took the lead in this effort. In the absence of specific legislation, state attorneys general frequently found themselves called upon to rule on the constitutionality of local junior college sponsorship, and they proved to be modestly, if often only temporarily, effective in blocking local junior college initiatives. Such was the case in California, where an Attorney General's ruling in 1915 prohibited any use of local school funds in support of the state's approximately fifteen junior colleges. This ruling had an immediate impact, forcing the closure of several of the state's earliest junior colleges. But it was effectively reversed

in 1917 when the state legislature adopted enabling legislation that placed the few surviving colleges on a sound legal footing, and permitted the organization of additional junior colleges.[53] In the third chapter, we cited the example of the Texas attorney general's nullification of the agreements between the University of Texas and the cities of San Antonio and Temple, that would have permitted the university to operate locally-funded branch campuses in both cities. While this ruling was initially problematic for Temple, as we saw in the third chapter the city's Chamber of Commerce soon circumvented the action when it convinced the Temple school board to serve as the sponsor of a junior college.

From the perspective of junior college proponents, certainly the most damaging opinion rendered in any state attorney general was the 1928 opinion issued by Ohio's Edward C. Turner. From the mid-1920s, Ohio's smaller cities had shown a growing interest in establishing junior

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[53] Under the guise of the Caminetti Act, adopted in 1907, California's school districts had claimed and received state aid for their postgraduate students on the same basis as high school students. It was this specific practice that the state's attorney general ruled unconstitutional in 1915, precipitating a crisis for junior colleges in such communities as Santa Monica and San Diego. For a contemporary's perspective on this crisis, see Bailey, Santa Rosa Junior College, 1918-1957, 5-6.

colleges, encouraged by a 1927 report issued by a committee of the Ohio College Association chaired by George Zook.[54] However, the Bureau of Inspection and Supervision (a state agency responsible for overseeing public facilities) countered the committee's recommendation by requesting an opinion from Turner on a school board's right to use its facilities to operate a junior college, even if it were fully supported by tuition. In a sweeping opinion, Turner effectively denied his state's school districts the authority to sponsor a junior college under any circumstance.[55] The attorney general noted that the term "junior college" had no legal meaning and therefore could not designate any particular class of schools. Further, while not denying the state the right to authorize and support a variety of public schools, including municipal universities (as it did at Cincinnati and Toledo) and county normal schools, Turner found that the legislature had never specifically granted

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[54] George Zook, "Report of Committee on Junior Colleges," Proceedings of the Ohio College Association 44 (1928): 3-4.

[55] 1928 Ohio Opinions of the Attorney General, No. 2017, Vol. 3, 1013. For a general discussion of Turner's decision and its impact on the development of the junior college in Ohio, see Pedersen, "State Government and the Junior College": 48-49.

local school boards the right to maintain any school beyond the high school. As the authority of a school district must be "clearly and distinctly granted" in statute, Turner concluded that no local public junior college could be established or operated within Ohio. The Ohio legislature sided with Turner and against Zook and his committee, refusing to adopt permissive legislation, and no school district proved willing to challenge the state directly.[54]

While the small cities and towns of Ohio chose to conform to Turner's decision, the school districts of other states were quite willing to simply ignore similar rulings or utilize creative strategies to obviate their effect. We have already described how school districts in Illinois refused to abide by the opinion of Attorney General Carlson and discontinue their junior colleges. In the state of Washington, local school districts were not so overt in their refusal to comply with an unfavorable attorney general's opinion, but they achieved much the same result through a conversion of their junior colleges

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[54] At the same time, many Ohio school districts effectively circumvented this prohibition by establishing limited postgraduate programs. By 1930, enrollments in these programs became so substantial that they were reported separately by the U.S. Office of Education in its annual enrollment report.

into "quasi-public" institutions. In 1927 Washington State's attorney general ruled that public junior colleges were unconstitutional, using basically the same arguments which would later be employed by Ohio's Turner. Using a two-prong strategy, the four Washington school districts then operating junior colleges set out to mitigate the effects of this ruling. Their first step was to reorganize their junior colleges under independent governing boards and to then contract with the local school district for needed services, paid for by a mix student fees, subventions and donations. Concurrently, these communities pursued enabling legislation that would permit them to return their junior colleges to public control. When this legislation was finally adopted in 1941, five quasi-public junior colleges were operating in Washington, and all five quickly took advantage of their new legal authority and tax support to expand through the adoption of comprehensive programs.[51]

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[51] Washington's junior college did not have an easy time in putting together the alliance of interests required to win passage of enabling legislation. Bills modeled on California's 1921 Junior College Act were introduced and failed in every session of the Washington legislature from 1927 through 1939. In 1929, a broad-based coalition of school and university educators, local boosters, and others came closest to victory with the introduction of HR 195. This bill would have recognized existing junior colleges and provided for general state

While lacking the broad authority of a state attorney general, state school superintendents were well-positioned by virtue of office to influence the development of the junior college within their respective jurisdictions. A few, notably California's Will C. Wood, used this influence to advance the cause of the local junior college.[56] But a significant number of chief state school officers were either indifferent to the junior college or allied themselves with its local opponents, particularly in states where grammar and high schools were inadequately funded.[57] In these states, chief school officers saw in

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aid. While facing only token opposition in the legislature, HR 195 was vetoed by Governor Roland Hartely. In his veto message, Hartely described his state's expenditures on education as "excessive" and decried the seemingly endless "pyramiding of educational functions" implicit in calls for new junior colleges, parental schools, and junior high schools. As Hartely bluntly observed, "The way to reduce taxes is to quit spending the people's money." See State of Washington, Senate Journal of the Twenty-First Legislature (Seattle, WA: 1929). In 1937, another junior college bill was passed by the legislature, but was again vetoed. See "We Stand Corrected," Junior College Journal 8, no. 7 (1938): 372.

[56] "Honorable Will C. Wood," Sierra Educational News 26, no. 6 (1930): np.

[57] In Kansas, school superintendent Vinsonhaler of Garden City experienced this indifference first hand while head of the state's junior college association. From his frequent contact with state school officials, Vinsonhaler became convinced that they viewed junior colleges as an "unwelcome offspring," of little interest or concern. As he recalled:

the public junior college simply another threat to their first responsibility -- the financial well-being of the common school.[60] Primarily through studies and reports, the chief state school officers of Louisiana, Texas, Utah, and Oklahoma sought to block local junior colleges from any access to school revenues. The actions of Louisiana's state superintendent in this regard are particulary noteworthy, for he was none other than former U.S. Commissioner of Education, William Tawney Harris. In 1928, after three extra-legal junior colleges had been organized by parish school boards, Harris authorized John M. Foote to assess the feasibility of the state permitting the establishment of others. Foote's assessment was hostile to any further expansion of the junior college in his state. More than anything, Foote feared the impact of junior colleges on local support for the lower grades. Harris concurred in Foote's recommendation, noting in a

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I made several trips to Topeka in the interest of the junior college, but these trips were not productive of much good.

See Flint, The Kansas Junior College, 10.

[60] The Florida legislature shared the same concern, and its 1939 act allowing for countywide junior colleges mandated that a college might only be continued if it could demonstrate that elementary and secondary schools were not adversely affected by inadequate financial support. See Florida Acts of 1939, c. 19151, S. 3.

preface to Foote's study that establishment of a junior college would not only draw scarce funds away from the state's elementary and secondary schools, but fell outside a school board's legal authority. At a minimum, Harris argued, the Louisiana legislature should adopt a junior college act that protected the lower school grades by guaranteeing them first claim on state and local tax revenues.[61] State lawmakers accepted Harris's recommendation, and Louisiana's junior college legislation proved so restrictive that three of the state's junior colleges closed and the fourth, Ouchita, (organized at the time Foote was preparing his report) was reorganized as a branch campus of Louisiana State University.

The next year found S. M. N. Marrs, the state superintendent for Texas, also advocating legislation to constrain any further growth in the number of his state's junior colleges. It was Marrs's hope that the Texas legislature would craft a bill to counter "the danger of over-promotion in cities and towns" of the junior college by those "ambitious school administrators and enterprising civic clubs and commercial organizations" who had yet to

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[61] John M. Foote, The Junior College Movement in Louisiana, Bulletin no. 11 (New Orleans: Louisiana State Department of Education, 1928): i.

provide adequate funding for their constitutionally-mandated grammar and high schools.[62] And just two years later, the Utah Board of Education, as part of a feasibility assessment of a state junior college system, also sought to dampen local enthusiasm for the junior college. While accepting in principle the need for local junior colleges, an investigating committee of the Utah board called for strict state oversight of any that might be organized. The committee did not mask its suspicions that school districts would act irresponsibly without such oversight:

> In a number of cases junior colleges have been started with more enthusiasm than judgment, due to local pride, community rivalry, or inability to count the cost.[63]

Also working against the need for local junior colleges, the committee argued, was that Utah already had made adequate provision for higher education through its state

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[62] Texas Department of Education, Texas Municipal Junior Colleges: 4.

[63] Investigating Committee of Utah Governmental Units, Junior College Study (Salt Lake: 1936), 40. While unmentioned by the committee, another consideration working again the spread of junior colleges was the presence of the Mormons' Brigham Young University in Provo. The Mormons, as we have already seen in the case of their junior college at Gila, were experiencing difficulty in maintaining their system of higher education, and they did not need additional competition for students from two or three new junior colleges in their home state.

university and normal schools. As the committee noted, the state already supported colleges in three of its most populous counties -- Cache, Salt Lake, and Cedar City -- and these schools drew heavily from surrounding counties. To a great degree, the committee concluded, public junior colleges in Utah would only duplicate efforts in the state's more populous counties or create inefficient institutions in its many rural communities.[44]

Even as the economy improved somewhat in the late 1930s, many state school superintendents continued to regard the junior college with a fair measure of suspicion. Oklahoma's superintendent used his 1940 annual report to express the fear that a junior college could easily "overshadow and dominate the high school program" as, in fact, had happened "in a few cases." To prevent this, he not only called on the state Board of Education to appoint a "Committee on Higher Institutions of Learning" to "discourage and prevent the offering of junior college work at the expense of the high school and elementary grades," but urged lawmakers to put the state's numerous junior colleges on a sound financial basis so that they would not compete with elementary and secondary

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[44] "Junior College in Utah," The Junior College Journal 1 (1931): 200-201.

schools.[65]

3. The Balancing Role of State Legislatures

By 1925, and with the number of public junior colleges approaching 200, state legislatures could no longer ignore their responsibility to establish a policy framework that balanced the interests of the junior college's local advocates and opponents at the same time it protected the general state interest. This was not a task that legislators took up with any great enthusiasm, but was generally forced upon them either by an unpopular attorney general's opinion (as had happened in California in 1917) or by the desire of civic boosters to remove the stigma of extra-legal status from their junior colleges. But when legislators did finally act, as we will see, they used the opportunity to go well beyond the mere recognition of existing junior colleges to impose stringent pre-conditions upon any community that wished to add to their state's complement of existing junior colleges. If they were going to authorize public junior colleges, state legislators reasoned, these schools would only be allowed in communities with the population and wealth to support an adequate program without any reliance

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[65] Oklahoma, The Eighteenth Biennial Report of the State Superintendent (Oklahoma City: 1940), 75.

upon the state treasury."

Those, such as George Vaughan, who have represented the junior college laws of California's legislature as a model for other states, have seriously overstated the influence of Sacramento, especially given its extraordinarily generous provision of state aid for junior colleges." As we will show, junior college legislation in California was the outgrowth of conditions unique to the state, and its replication was consequently limited. Far more of a national model was the junior college law enacted in 1917 by the Kansas legislature. That year, the Kansas legislature permitted the state's larger school districts to offer the first two years of college work and, with voter approval, to levy a dedicated tax in support of these new institutions."

While the sources are unclear, it appears that the

" As a rule, state legislatures were steadfast in their view that public junior colleges should receive no state aid, but rely entirely upon local funds. As late as 1937, only thirteen states had adopted enabling junior college acts, and just two of these, California and Missouri, made provision for direct state aid. Three states specifically prohibited any such aid and the remainder simply made no provision. See Edward H. Nix, "Present Legal Status of the Junior College," Junior College Journal 8, no. 1 (October, 1937): p. 16.

"Vaughan, The Community College Story, 29.

" Kansas Laws 1917, c. 283, 410.

impetus to the Kansas law originated among the civic leaders of the communities of Holton and Fort Scott. While other conditions may well have played some role, Campbell College had recently closed in Holton, representing a serious blow to the community's prestige. The situation in Fort Scott was much the same. It too had lost a private college -- Kansas Normal College -- and its attempt to secure a branch campus of Kansas State College as a replacement had failed.

Apparently in a move to protect the state against the uncontrolled multiplication of junior colleges, yet respond to the need of both Holton and Fort Scott to regain a local college, the state legislature adopted a deceptively simple junior college act. As would be the case in virtually every other state that subsequently legislated on the junior college, the Kansas act permitted its larger cities to establish "upward extension" programs and to levy a local 2 mill property tax for their support.'' But the legislature was also careful to limit any potential demand on the state treasury from the consequence of its new law. The Kansas act not only prohibited the payment of state aid in support of any

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'' Flint, The Kansas Junior College, 8-10.

junior college organized under the act, but also required that local voters approve a junior college through a special referendum.[1] While the Kansas legislature crafted a measure that authorized the state's larger cities to provide locally-funded, proximate higher education, it also effectively precluded small, low-wealth towns from creating junior colleges they could not support and which, if these towns were to then join forces, might eventually create a state-wide political alliance sufficiently powerful to secure state aid from the legislature.[2]

While the California legislature has often been credited for its enlightened and progressive support of the junior college, the record shows it to have been no less reactive than the Kansas legislature. We have already noted that California's 1917 junior college act was only

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[1] Kansas Laws of 1917, c. 283, p. 410.

[2] It is no small irony that Holton's junior college was also the first in Kansas to be closed by its sponsoring school district, the decision coming in 1919. The community was simply too small to provide an adequate enrollment, and the tax burden proved too great for the city's taxpayers. Also, the threat that communities might seek state aid for their junior colleges was very real. In 1925, a bill very nearly cleared the Kansas legislature authorizing a modest level of state aid, and similar bills would be regularly submitted, only to meet the same fate. It would be until 1961 that the Kansas legislature would finally approve aid for the state's junior colleges.

adopted in response to a ruling of the state attorney general that denied any form of state aid to the state's junior colleges.[3] This ruling appears to have led to the suspension of some of California's junior colleges -- at Santa Monica, Long Beach, and Pasadena -- and the prompting of proposals, through the non-partisan Council of Education, for legislation that would correct the attorney general's opinion.

The response of the California legislature to the Council's recommendations -- the Junior College Act of 1917 -- was little more than a stop-gap measure.[4] The act did permit local communities to tax themselves in support of a junior college and provided for a limited amount of state aid, but it failed to restrict the right of civic elites to sponsor a junior colleges without voter approval, as we have already seen with the founding of Santa Rosa Junior College. Even the smallest school district, if it operated a high school, was free to

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[3] Will C. Wood, "Needed Legislation Affecting the Junior College," Sierra Educational News 12 (October 1916): 530-531.

[4] Alexis F. Lange, "The Junior College as an Integral Part of the Public-School System," School Review 25, no. 7 (1917): 470-471.

[5] California Statutes of 1917, c. 304, p. 463.

establish a junior college department and to do so without the explicit approval of local voters or the state board of education.

As was the case in 1917, the California legislature's next foray into junior college legislation -- the Junior College Act of 1921 -- was not the result of thoughtful deliberation, but was prompted by an unexpected windfall from the federal government in the form of royalty payments under the Oil and Mineral Act. At the instigation of Will C. Wood, the California legislature elected to use this opportunity to create permanent junior college fund, which formed the cornerstone of the state's 1921 Junior College Act. In contrast to the state's 1917 act (which, interestingly, was not repealed by the new law) any community that chose to organize a junior college under the terms of the 1921 law was required to accept, in exchange for a generous grant of state aid, a significant level of state and voter oversight. To qualify for payments from the state's permanent fund, a community proposing to establish a junior college was required to have a minimum property assessment of $10 million. Moreover, a junior college's proponents had to first secure the endorsement of the state Board of Education and then secure voter approval of the junior college through a

special referendum.

Especially in the growing suburbs of San Francisco and Los Angeles, an unexpectedly large number of communities proved willing to accept the procedural burdens of the 1921 act in exchange for its grant of state aid. Indeed, by 1928 so many junior colleges had been organized under the provisions of the 1921 act that the permanent fund was virtually exhausted. It is one of the ironies of the history of California's junior colleges that those communities which had accepted greater state oversight and regulation of their junior colleges in order to gain access to the state's permanent fund quickly found themselves left with the oversight and regulation, but no royalty money, and as dependent as those junior colleges still operating under the less restrictive 1917 act upon the legislature's unpredictable appropriations from its general fund.[5]

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[5] California Statutes of 1921, c. 495, 756.

[6] Arnold Joyal projected, in 1932, that California's Junior College Fund would "face a deficit of $400,000" by 1933 and that this bleak financial situation would be further aggravated by the state's continuing increase in junior college enrollments. See, Arnold Edward Joyal, "Factors Relating to the Establishment and Maintenance of Junior Colleges, with Special Reference to California," University of California Publications in Education 6 (1932): 366.

California's was not the only legislature to demonstrate something less than whole-hearted support of the junior college. One finds just this ambivalence in the Iowa legislature's response to its junior colleges. As in most other Midwestern states, Iowa's legislators initially ignored their state's public junior colleges. Although the state's first junior college was established at Mason City in 1918, it was not until 1927, with eleven junior colleges already open, that the Iowa legislature awakened to the need to address the potential cost of any further increase in junior college sponsorship for local taxpayers and, much more seriously, the state treasury. During its 1927 session, the Iowa legislature followed the Kansas model by first sanctioning the state's existing junior colleges, permitting the state's high schools to maintain "schools of a higher order." It then took several steps to protect the interests of state and local taxpayers, first

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The unconstrained multiplication of junior colleges in such regions as western Iowa and southeastern Kansas tended to raise the expense of these colleges for local taxpayers because of their inherent inefficiencies. It was not simply that many of these junior colleges were small, although that contributed to this inefficiency, but because they were located in relatively close proximity to each other. As a result, these junior colleges did not earn the tuition surcharges from non-resident students that would have provided additional revenues to offset fixed costs and reduce their need for local tax support and, potentially, state subsidies.

by mandating that any new public junior colleges be approved both by the State Department of Education and local voters, and then by requiring that the expenses of any junior college be met through tuition charges sufficient to cover a student's entire "cost of instruction."

As we saw in Chapter IV, Iowa's small town parents had already shown themselves quite willing to pay the $90 or $100 tuition charged by most of the state's junior colleges in order to keep their children at home, so the 1927 act failed to stem the rush of Iowa's small towns to establish junior colleges. Not until 1932, in the midst of the Depression, did the Iowa legislature take definitive steps to restrict the prerogative of communities to establish a junior college. That year, the legislature amended the state's junior college law to forbid the establishment of a junior college in any school district with less than 20,000 residents. In a state dominated by farms and small towns, this measure effectively capped the number of junior colleges.[1]

Where the Iowa legislature had used mandatory tuition

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[1] Code of Iowa 1927, s. 4217, 4267b-1.

[1] Iowa Acts of the 44th General Assembly, c. 93, 60.

charges and, when that failed, a minimum population requirement to control the spread of the junior college, other states chose different strategies to achieve the same end. One provision adopted by some state legislatures that proved especially effective in counterbalancing the advantages enjoyed by the junior college's local proponents was the requirement that any proposed junior college be approved by a supermajority of voters. The Minnesota legislature, in a 1925 law, extended legal recognition to the state's six junior colleges that had survived a decade of extra-legal status, but stipulated that any new junior college must be approved by a 75 percent majority of voters.[80] In the same spirit, the Nebraska legislature set its supermajority at 60 percent -- a requirement, as we have seen, that assured the failure of local proponents to gain voter approval of a junior colleges in Grand Island.[81]

It is important to emphasize that the junior college

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[80] Minnesota Laws of 1925, c.103, 97. However, it should also be noted that in 1927 the legislature reconsidered its position and reduced the required supermajority 60 per cent. See Mason's Minnesota Statutes, 1927, s. 2992(1)-2992(6). This reduction in the supermajority enabled proponents in Duluth to secure voter approval of a junior college even though the state already maintained a normal school in Duluth.

[81] Nebraska Laws of 1931, c. 48, p. 146.

could prove as divisive in state legislatures as it did in many cities and towns. The legislative history of Nebraska's initial junior college act, adopted in 1931 only after several years of often heated debate, reflects the extent to which legislatures could be divided in their response to proposals to bring a state's extra-legal junior colleges within the scope of state law. As in nearly all Midwestern states, Nebraska's first public junior college -- in McCook -- opened without the benefit of enabling state legislation. After a lengthy campaign on behalf of a junior college by the city's local newspaper and civic leaders, the McCook school board voted in 1926 to "extend opportunity to complete the first two years of a college education under home influence and parental direction."[52] McCook was typical of the small and aspiring cities of the period that chose the junior college as the best available means to meet their need for a proximate college. It was a growing city, the seat of Red Willow County and the leading commercial center for Nebraska's southwestern corner. Further, no state or private colleges operated in Red Willow or its adjacent counties, and the state university at Lincoln was some 200

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[52] Charles Lindsay, "New Junior College Law in Nebraska," Junior College Journal 2, no. 1 (1931): 11-15.

miles to the east.

With the convening of the Nebraska legislature in January, 1927, a bill was introduced to grant McCook and other communities of 5,000 or more residents the authority to establish a junior college. The bill, H.R. 351, provoked a spirited debate when brought to the floor in March. Some legislators held that the bill was too restrictive, and that even smaller cities could maintain a junior college successfully. Others disagreed, arguing that the elimination of a minimum population requirement would result in the uncontrolled and inefficient replication of junior colleges throughout the state. Some of the more cynical legislators supported the bill in the hope that a more general availability of junior colleges would save the state money by reducing enrollments at the state university and its normal schools. Yet another faction opposed the bill outright, contending that the state already provided sufficient access to higher education through its university, its normal schools, and, most importantly of all, its sizeable number of small and fiscally marginal denominational colleges. In the end, supporters of the status quo won out. Although HR 351's proponents were able to avoid outright defeat, they saw

their bill postponed indefinitely by a vote of 51 to 37.[23]

Two years later, the pressure on Nebraska's legislature to adopt a junior college law increased with the opening of a junior college in Norfolk and the completion of a feasibility study by the school board of North Platte.[24] The bill offered at the beginning of the legislature's 1929 session differed significantly from the bill introduced in 1927. It answered the concerns of those local taxpayers who feared a junior college's potential impact on the school levy by requiring that any junior college be approved by a 60 percent supermajority in a special referendum. It also ensured that any junior college which overcame this hurdle would never pose a threat to the state university or Nebraska's private colleges by severely limiting the junior colleges' potential income. The legislature not only mandated an annual tuition of $108, it also set a maximum local levy in support of a junior college at just 2 mills, and stipulated that

junior colleges organized under its provisions were

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[23] Saylor, Legislation, Finance, and Development of Public Junior Colleges, 100-102.

[24] E. T. Kelly, "Feasibility of Establishment of a Public Junior College in North Platte, Nebraska" (master's thesis, University of Nebraska, 1928).

never to apply for or to receive state aid for their organization, maintenance or support.

As a tactic for limiting the spread of junior colleges to those Nebraska communities in which public support was widespread and where the local tax base was was sufficient to meet expenses without state aid, Nebraska's Junior College Act of 1931 proved to be extremely successful. Voters in Scottsbluff and McCook overwhelmingly approved junior college proposals, accepting the increased taxes implicit in their decision. But in Grand Island and Norfolk, no broad-based alliance came forward to support a junior college, and votes proposing a junior college failed in both communities.

It would leave something of a false impression of the legislative response to the public junior college to limit this discussion to only those states which followed the pattern established in Kansas, in which junior colleges were permitted only on terms that tended to balance conflicting local interests while effectively insulating the state treasury from the junior college. In a number of states, opposition to the public junior college by significant state and local factions -- large landholders,

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Nebraska Laws 1931, c. 48, 146.

state universities, private colleges, and others -- was sufficient to block the adoption of any form of enabling legislation, effectively precluding the organization of junior colleges in these states during this century's first half. Such was the case in Wyoming. During the 1920s and early 1930s, several of the state's small cities had expressed an interest in establishing a junior college. With its only public university located in the far southeastern corner of the state, geography was especially influential in building local interest among the state's widely dispersed towns in securing some form of proximate higher education, ideally in the form of the junior college. As Karl Winchell reported in 1931, many of the state's larger high schools had already begun to offer a limited number of postgraduate courses, for which the University of Wyoming was granting credit. Nor, according to Winchell, would junior colleges impose an undue hardship on the taxpayers of Wyoming's larger communities. As he calculated, at least five Wyoming communities had the tax base required to support a credible junior college program. It was Winchell's judgement that any obstacle to the organization of junior colleges in Wyoming came from

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"Wyoming Community College Records Manual," Wyoming State Archives, Museum and Historical Department, n.d., 3.

without, and not from within, the state's communities.

Events confirm Winchell's assessment of the obstacles faced by junior college proponents in Wyoming. Throughout the 1930s, the Wyoming legislature adamantly opposed the adoption of junior college enabling legislation, rejecting bills in three successive sessions: 1933, 1935, and 1937. The advocacy of the civic leaders of Casper, Rock Springs, and Sheridan simply could not overcome the range of interests allied against these bills.

As suggested by Robert Lahti's research, legislative opposition to locally-funded junior colleges gained its strength from the alliance of two major factions.[1] First were those legislators who believed that the state should not permit any school district to divert tax revenue in support of a junior college until adequate provision had been made for its grammar and high schools -- a mark few Wyoming school districts could honestly claim to have met. The second faction consisted of those legislators who held that public junior colleges were simply not needed in

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[1] Karl F. Winchell, "Junior Colleges in Wyoming," Junior College Journal 1: 540.

[2] Robert E. Lahti, "A Review of Junior-college Development in Wyoming and a Statistical Comparison of Academic Performance of Junior-College Transfer Students and native Students at the University of Wyoming" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wyoming, 1961), 44-54.

Wyoming, despite the great distances and challenging geography that isolated the University of Wyoming from every one of the state's larger communities except Cheyenne. For this faction, the adoption of permissive junior college legislation was not, in itself, so much of a concern as would be the potentially negative impact of a growing number of junior colleges on a seriously under-enrolled state university.[1] For the legislature to allow such towns as Casper, Powell, and Sheridan to sponsor a junior colleges was to virtually assure an enrollment decline at Laramie and a proportionate decrease in revenues needed to meet the fixed costs of the university's dormitories and other facilities.

Among the state legislatures that failed to adopt any junior college enabling legislation, among which were Oregon, Arkansas, and Indiana, what distinguished Wyoming's was its creative use of its constitutional control of local taxing authority to effectively deny such towns as Casper and Sheridan the means to circumvent its will.[2] The Wyoming legislature departed from the common

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[1] In 1935, enrollment at the University of Wyoming totaled just 1,528.

[2] It is not clear from the record why Casper and other aspiring towns in Wyoming did not establish quasi-public junior colleges in the interim before the state

practice among Western states of mandating only a minimum school levy that local voters, at their option, could increase through a tax override. Aspiring communities, willing to bear additional local taxes, regularly voted overrides to fund kindergartens, adult schools, and junior colleges that simply could not be financed through the state-mandated minimum levy. Instead, the Wyoming legislature severely restricted the ability of even its wealthiest districts to introduce junior colleges by stipulating a maximum school levy at a level that would provide local districts with little more than the revenue required to maintain a basic school program. As Winchell found, of the five Wyoming cities with a high school population large enough to sustain a viable junior college, four were already taxing at the maximum rate simply to meet the needs of their grammar and high

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legislature adopted some form of enabling legislation. It was not as if they did not have regional examples to emulate. In 1936, for example, civic leaders in the Colorado town of Lamar organized a non-profit junior college, the Junior College of Southeastern Colorado. Relying on financial support from the city's Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations, the college persisted until it was reorganized as a public junior college when Colorado finally adopted enabling legislation in 1946. Possibly the civic associations in Wyoming's communities simply did not have the means to make such a commitment. See Lamar Community College, General Catalog (Lamar, CO: 1994), 2.

schools. The Wyoming legislature's limitation of local taxing authority denied these communities an important and widely used mechanism to augment their basic school program and introduce such innovations as junior colleges and adult schools.[1]

4. The Divided Response of State Universities and Private Colleges

From the early histories of McDowell and Eells, much has been made of the junior college's great debt to the advocacy of various university presidents and deans. Ralph Fields, for one, even went so far as to describe the influence of the university upon the junior college in the form of an axiom: Where university leadership on behalf of the junior college was "favorable and dynamic" the development of the junior was greatest.[2] However, the historical record fails to support Field's rule. If one looks beyond Chicago, Minnesota, and Stanford, the university presidents of this era were much more guarded in their reaction to, and support for the junior college. For every Harper at Chicago and Vincent at Minnesota, there was a Hill at Missouri and Sproul at California, questioning the value of the comprehensive junior

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[1] Winchell, "Junior Colleges in Wyoming": 544.

[2] Fields, The Community College Movement, 19.

colleges. As an editor from American Educational Digest summarized a discussion by a large meeting of Mid-western state university presidents on the "challenge" of the junior colleges, "There is no unanimity of attitude toward the junior college movement."[1]

With the possible exception of Minnesota's George Vincent, it can be argued that even those university leaders most favorably disposed to the junior college were motivated more by their own institutional interests than by any ideological desire to expand educational opportunity through local junior colleges. With their universities seemingly overrun by freshmen -- many of whom were destined for academic failure and a humiliating dismissal -- and hoping to gain something of the prestige that had come to private universities and colleges through their use of selective admission policies, many of the junior college's public university "advocates" agreed with

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[1] "The Junior College Movement," American Educational Digest 47 (December, 1927): 171. Complicating matters further, it was not uncommon within some states for the flagship university and normal colleges to take opposite views of the junior college. When, in 1939, the Texas legislature considered extending a nominal level of state aid to its large number of public junior colleges, the University of Texas was generally supportive, but the state's normal colleges were strongly opposed. The bill failed as a result. See "Texas State Aid," Junior College Journal 9, no. 6 (1939): 324.

Robert J. Leonard's description of the "proper" relationship between the public university and the junior college:

> For the university the easy solution is to release its hold upon these [junior] two years as soon as possible, looking forward to much the same relation with them that now exists with high schools. Such a transfer of burden would permit our universities to devote all their faculties to what is known technically as higher education."

The one striking exception to this general observation would be the University of Minnesota's George Vincent. Prior to assuming the presidency in 1911, Vincent had served as dean of the University of Chicago's Junior College. In 1914, just three years into his tenure at Minnesota, Vincent secured Faculty Senate approval of regulations that allowed local high schools and private academies to award recognized college credit through the sophomore level. Vincent also succeeded in designating his university's "Committee on Relations of the University with Other Institutions of Learning" as the formal accrediting agency for any public or private junior college within Minnesota. Building on these successes, Vincent then encouraged schoolmen in the state's larger

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" Robert J. Leonard, "The Junior College from the Standpoint of the University," in Problems in Education (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1927), 51.

communities to extend their high school programs an additional two years, and by 1920 eight junior colleges -- seven public and one private -- had been established, although not all would survive.

Vincent also proposed a series of progressive steps to finance Minnesota's junior colleges, foreshadowing several of the provisions of California's 1921 Junior College Act. Specifically, Vincent called for his state to provide a uniform level of support for all public junior colleges, in addition to revenues raised through tuition and a local millage -- a proposal which, had it been adopted, could well have resulted in an offsetting loss of funding for his university. Also foreshadowing the California law, Vincent argued against the excessive multiplication of junior colleges that could have resulted from an over-generous state subsidy, arguing instead for a "rational and statesman-like policy" in which Minnesota would divide itself into districts, and "select a few centers for the establishment of junior colleges."[1]

Again, it must be emphasized that Minnesota's Vincent was an exception, and that much of what he proposed was never enacted by the Minnesota legislature. But his

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[1] Keller, The Junior College in Minnesota, 40-41.

interest in creating strong, viable junior colleges, even at the potential cost to his university, stands in marked contrast to the actions of virtually every other public university president. Even as these presidents spoke publicly in support of local junior colleges, a careful reading of their comments shows that they saw these institutions solely as a means to advance the strategic interests of their universities. One finds this sentiment in the views of the University of Missouri's president, H. Ross Hill, who expected that widespread replication of the junior college would

> bring relief from the present preponderance in numbers of freshmen and sophomores, as compared with the enrollment of upper-class academic and professional students and also from the necessity of eliminating many who are now drifting into the universities without definite aims and without the intellectual interests that are essential to wholesome conditions of university life."

Writing some 15 years later, the University of California's President Robert Gordon Sproul's view of the junior college differed little from Hill's. Like his Missouri colleague, Sproul believed that many students came to his campuses at Berkeley and Los Angeles ill-equipped academically and poorly motivated to take

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" A. Ross Hill, "The Junior College," in National Association of State Universities Transactions and Proceedings 13 (1915): 126.

advantage of a university education. And also like Hill, Sproul saw it as the junior college's special mission -- its "responsibility" -- to provide a form of post-secondary education to those young Californians not equipped by preparation, talent, or temperament for the university. Fortunately for California's junior colleges, Sproul's influence was limited, and he failed to win wide acceptance among Californians for his particular reformulation of Hill's vision of the junior college. That even Sproul recognized a need to moderate his views on the junior college to better conform with public opinion is suggested both by his assignment of a faculty member to specifically study the junior college and by his appointment of a university committee to improve the extremely strained relationship between the University and the state's junior colleges.[1]

In contrast to the mixed reaction of university presidents and senior deans to the "challenge" of the junior college, presidents of liberal arts colleges were virtually unanimous in their condemnation of this educational innovation. Already under great pressure from

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[1] Robert Gordon Sproul, "Certain Aspects of the Junior College," Junior College Journal 1, no. 5 (1930), 274-280.

the likes of U.S. Commissioner Claxton and the regional accrediting associations to increase enrollments, enlarge their endowments, and strengthen their academic programs, presidents of private colleges saw the public junior college as a serious threat to the viability of their institutions. These colleges, which had endured decades of small, uncertain enrollments, irregular community support, and ill-prepared students, saw no reason to welcome a new institution allied closely with the public high school and subsidized by local taxpayers.

The reaction of the attendees at a 1921 meeting of the American Association of Colleges to a presentation by Detroit Junior College's David MacKenzie suggests the depth of concern with which America's private colleges viewed the public junior college." At the meeting, MacKenzie delivered a paper offering his vision of the public junior college, including its potential to offer a three-year baccalaureate through an intensified course of study." His reception, according to a reporter from the

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" A report of the meeting itself appeared in the New York Evening Post. In addition, a reaction to this report and to the views expressed by attendees concerning the junior college was unfavorably reported on in "News and Editorial Comment," School Review 29 (1921): 164-165.

" Of course, MacKenzie was not the first educator to suggest shortening the length of the baccalaureate course

New York Evening Post was "chilly" and his audience was left "horrified" by his comments. At this point, none other than New York's Augustus Downing stepped in to inform those in attendance that they had little to fear from the junior college and that, for his part, the New York State Department of Education would never recognize any junior college "because it was still in the experimental stage."[xxx] While it is difficult to measure the political effectiveness of private college presidents in blocking the spread of public junior colleges, it can hardly have been a coincidence that public junior colleges were rarely found in those states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and New York, where private colleges were numerous and politically active.

Summary

If nothing else, this assessment of the opposition faced by the local proponents of the public junior college should lead to a rejection of the conventional

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of study. Harvard's Eliot had advocated for a similar plan some years earlier, with equal success.

[xxx] Downing was a man of his word. The founders of Sarah Lawrence requested that their institution be known as a junior college. New York's Regents rejected their request.

representation of junior college critics as unenlightened and self-interested obstacles to progress. A more accurate description of these critics would acknowledge that some who questioned the wisdom of local junior college sponsorship were principled advocates of reasonable positions. Such is the way one should view the voters of Grand Island, Nebraska, whose rejection of a junior college was based on a rational assessment of their community's capacity to bear the college's cost in the face of the virtual collapse of the region's farm economy. So also should we view Philadelphia's school commissioners in their rejection of repeated requests to append a junior college to their city's Central High School.

Philadelphia's school commissioners knew full well that a junior college -- of direct benefit to a very few -- would drain away limited school funds that would be better used in bringing universal high school education to their city. And, last, we should recognize that some taxpayers, like North Carolina's Zimmerman, simply disagreed with the constitutionality of the central tenant of the junior college's leading proponents -- that "education is a social and individual good and that society is obligated to provide as much of it as any individual desires and can

profit from." For Zimmerman and others of a similar mind, conventional practice had set a definite upper limit on locally-supported public education -- the twelfth grade -- and they saw no justification to pay for anything more.

What should be equally evident from this chapter is that opposition to the public junior college was, on the whole, ineffective. Not only was it poorly coordinated at the local level, but local opponents were unable to build lasting alliances at the state level to offset some of the inherent advantages enjoyed by the junior college's advocates. The obstacles to such alliances were many. Constitutional officers came and went, and the junior college was rarely an issue of such importance that it justified the expenditure of political capital by a state official. Similarly, public university presidents, who might very well have provided junior college critics with some much needed focus and direction, had to be careful not to appear too elitist if they wished to avoid potential conflict with a democratically-elected legislature.

Yet, of all the factors to most seriously undermine any effective opposition to the junior college was the

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Thornton, The Community Junior College, 47.

failure of state legislatures to respond quickly to the need for enabling legislation. As was the case in Iowa and Texas, it was only after the number of junior colleges had grown to a point that their sponsoring communities had the potential of forming the legislative alliances needed to secure a program of state aid for their junior colleges that state legislatures took concrete steps to restrict the ability of local junior college boosters to create even more junior colleges. While specific legislative strategies may have varied from state to state, as a general rule state legislatures sought not only to strengthen the position of local critics, typically through the requirement of a special referendum, but they limited the communities that could even hold a referendum to those with sufficient population and taxable wealth to support a junior college without any need for state aid. Yet because state legislatures were so late in taking these steps, their success in slowing the increase in public junior colleges was mixed. In some states, such as Nebraska and Minnesota, restrictive legislation proved sufficient, and in the case of Nebraska even reduced the number of junior colleges by more than half. But in Iowa and Kansas, it would not be until these states felt the full force of the Depression that local enthusiasm for the

junior college at last began to wane.

In forming any generalization about the nature of the struggle between the junior colleges proponents and opponents, one point should be kept in mind. The conflict that attended the development of the public junior college should not be seen in terms of a moral struggle, in which diametrically opposed forces of good and evil, of progress and privilege, competed for dominance. Both sides in this debate showed a remarkable degree of forbearance as public policy at the state level only slowly developed. As we saw in the case of Joliet Junior College, J. Stanley Brown was careful not to antagonize those who might object to his school's experiment with higher education, but then those who did object to this experiment refrained from seeking redress through the courts as the Illinois legislature slowly grappled with crafting an acceptable junior college act — an process that took more than 30 years. To keep mattes in perspective, neither proponents or opponents of the junior college regarded the institution to be of such importance as to justify open conflict or, even more seriously, to give state government the excuse and the opportunity to impose new and onerous limits on local the

autonomy in the governance of the public schools. Appeals to the courts were rare, the actions of state officials were frequently circumvented or even ignored, and when state legislatures did intervene, it was largely to protect state interests while leveling the playing field in any local debate over the question junior college sponsorship.

What, then, we find in the resolution of conflict over the junior college is a general preference at both the local and state levels for compromise and accommodation in the interest of all. Such was clearly the preference of the citizens of Indiana as they debated the establishment of junior colleges. Despite evidence of local interest, the Indiana legislature was reluctant to authorize public junior colleges of the sort found in

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Charles Taylor, Nebraska's State Superintendent of Public Instruction in 1933, observed just this reticence on the part of local junior college opponents as his state moved toward adopting permissive junior college legislation:

> While it was true that there were many persons opposed to the [establishment of local junior colleges], yet they did not, for the time being, do anything to embarrass the board of education of these communities, being content to await legislative enactment.

State of Nebraska, Thirty-Second Biennial Report of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Lincoln, NB: 1933), 27.

Illinois, Nebraska, and California. Through the 1930s, the Indiana legislature failed to adopt any junior college enabling legislation, most likely in deference to the interests of the state's many small, private colleges and local taxpayers.

But the Indiana legislature was, in fact, open to a measure of compromise with those local interests who sought some form of proximate higher education, whatever guise it might take. While rejecting at least two separate bills providing for the local sponsorship of junior colleges, the Indiana legislature did not stand in the way of postgraduate programs in nearly two-thirds of the state's high schools.[3] And even more interestingly, in 1931 the Indiana legislature authorized Vincennes University, a private two-year college, to receive the proceeds of a 1.5 mill tax levied by the county commissioners of Knox County to operate what was, for all intents and purposes, a public junior college for Knox County residents.[4] While unable to bring itself to follow California's lead, the Indiana legislature was

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[3] J. R. Shannon, "Junior College Needs in Indiana," Junior College Journal 4 (1933): 25.

[4] "Knox County," Junior College Journal 2, no. 4 (1932): 217.

nevertheless willing to endorse a unique arrangement benefitting the citizens of Knox county and supported by a private college. To anyone familiar with Continental systems of higher education, there is something of an ad hoc quality in the Indiana legislature's response to local desires for proximate higher education. But, in fact, the Indiana legislature used its power to balance conflicting interests in a manner that met most needs adequately yet did no serious harm to any. This response may have found disfavor with any who desired a tightly structured and rationalized American schooling system, but it exemplifies the pragmatism that has long characterized the governance of American education and is a source of its continuing strength, flexibility, and public acceptance.

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